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ART
IN
ORNAMENT AND DRESS.

A R T
IN
ORNAMENT AND DRESS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF
CHARLES BLANC,
MEMBER OF THE INSTITUTE, AND FORMERLY DIRECTOR OF FINE ARTS.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

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ART IN ORNAMENT AND DRESS.

PART I.

THE GRAMMAR OF THE DECORATIVE ARTS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE GENERAL LAWS OF ORNAMENT.

NATURE, viewed in the grand spectacles, permanent or ephemeral, which she offers to our eyes, is not beautiful, but she is sublime. She is not beautiful, because she lacks the three conditions of beauty—order, proportion, and unity. Neither the stars in the firmament, nor the trees in the forests, nor the rivers in their courses, nor the ocean imprisoned within its bounds, nor the continents in the irregularity of their outlines, and the upheavals of their surface, present any apparent regularity or visible order. The immutable laws which govern both cosmical phenomena, and the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, only manifest themselves in the succession of ages, and exist but in mental contemplation and the record of history. Order then is wanting in nature seen on a grand scale, that is to say, a visible order, since it is impossible for us to seize at one glance,

as in a picture, the alternation of day and night, the recurrence of the seasons, the periodical motion of the planets, and the rhythm which governs the universe.

It is only in her lesser works that nature begins to be beautiful, because in these only she exhibits order, takes pleasure in symmetry, offers to us perceptible unities and sensible harmonies. At the outset, in her lowest kingdom, she reveals in crystallisation an astonishing regularity, a mysterious geometrical design. Next, order is apparent in a more general, connected, and striking manner, when we observe the vegetable kingdom. Proportion is not there as yet, proportion, properly so called, that is to say, the condition of a body in which all its members have a common relation among themselves, and to the whole. We know that the size of a tree cannot be determined from the dimensions of its branches, as the stature of a man from the measure of his hand or his foot. Many plants, however, are regular in their forms, affect symmetrical arrangements, and are ornamented with admirable delicacy. Lastly comes the animal kingdom, in which proportion plainly declares itself, the law of numbers is manifest, symmetry is self-evident, and its very movements obey in their freedom, an intentional equilibrium, and an inexorable rhythm. So as creation rises in the scale, order becomes more complicated, abundant, striking, and marvellous.

But the word *order* is only used here as a generic term to express what is common to all things adorned by nature. The regularity of her lesser works, and the charm which she has thrown around them, proceed from principles, distinct enough, but very few in number;

and as these distinct principles are the inevitable elements of all ornament of man's invention, it is of consequence to have a precise acquaintance with them, to distinguish them well one from the other, and to reduce them to their simplest elements, carefully avoiding confounding those that are *primary* with those that are not so.

Moreover, there can be no nobler satisfaction to the mind than to be able to unravel what is beyond measure complicated, to diminish what is apparently innumerable, and to reduce to a few clear points what was involved in a maze of obscurity.

Just as the twenty-six letters of the alphabet have been and will be sufficient to form the words necessary for the expression of all human thought, so certain elements, susceptible of combination amongst themselves, have sufficed and will suffice to create ornaments, whose variety may be multiplied indefinitely. In fact, the numberless methods which men have invented to this day, and which they will continue to invent for the adornment of their persons, their dwellings, or their temples, owe their existence to the application of one of the five following principles:—

REPETITION, ALTERNATION, SYMMETRY, PROGRESSION,
AND CONFUSION.

Such are the primary sources to which we may reduce all ornaments of which the idea has been borrowed from nature, and which man has subjected to the law of his intelligence, and to his own free control.

REPETITION.

However "*divers et ondoyant*" he may be, as Montaigne says, man is essentially a being all of a piece. The eyes of his body correspond to those of his mind. To act upon his mind we must use the same means as in exciting his physical sensations. A single prick of a pin is nothing, but a hundred such can rouse the sensitiveness of our organs. Thus it is that everything that appeals to our feelings acquires an astonishing power by the simple reiteration of the active cause. We see how the same mode of procedure is found in all the arts, in architecture, sculpture, and painting, as well as in music, literature, and poetry.

The simplest mode of decorating a surface is by the repetition of any given figure. Any form, however insignificant in itself, becomes interesting by repetition, at first because the artist by repeating it forces us to take notice of it, and reveals an intention which would have escaped our observation without this repetition; and next, because number often suggests thoughts which unity would not have originated.

For example, the repetition of a spiral ornament on a pedestal, a column, or the border of a panel, awakens in us the idea of one object pursuing another. Hence has arisen the name of *postes* (Vitruvian scroll), given to that



VITRUVIAN SCROLL.

series of running volutes which we meet with so fre-

quently on architraves in architecture, and also in iron-work, goldsmiths' work, and pottery. These spirals also remind us of the succession of the waves of the sea, and the imaginative poet may see in them by analogy, a troop of maidens pursuing each other in space, not frivolously, but in cadence, as if executing a sacred dance. And if such an ornament be used round a large vase, the spiral seems endless, because the convexity of the vase hiding from us part of its leading lines, our imagination sees them in constant, nay, in perpetual pursuit of each other round the amphora.

Let us now suppose the succession of these curved lines changed into a succession of straight lines, and we shall have a different expression, owing its power, however, to the same principle, and appearing as severe as the other was graceful. Bent always at the same angle, and at equal distances, these bare lines form the winding ornament called the *Greek fret*, and they become imposing because they have a processional character, and



GREEK FRET.

seem to obey a mysterious order, or to conform to the rhythm of a grave, slow, and ceremonial harmony.

It is from repetition that all architectural ornaments borrow their external aspect, their interest in our eyes, and their sway over our feelings. A series of discs in relief, or of circles moulded hollow, at greater or less distances, adorn a frieze agreeably enough. The mere repetition of triglyphs produces a spirited and marked

decoration on the entablature of the Doric temple. It wanted nothing but a simple unbroken series of mutules to give animation to the cornice of the Parthenon, and successive rows of small cones called *guttæ*, to enrich the soffit. The dull square, the hard and frigid cube, become ornamental as soon as they are set in a row; so much so, that the architect employs them to form the tooth-like ornament in the richest of the three orders—the Corinthian. A repetition of roses, accompanied by a chaplet of beads, formed a sufficient decoration of the Ionic portico of the Erechtheum at Athens.

Is it necessary to speak of the part played in music by the recurrence of the first bars, that renewal of the theme, *da capo*, which is indispensable if one wishes to feel the effect of music in all its fulness? What do I say! To move us powerfully, nothing more is needed than rhythm, that is to say the repetition, accelerated or diminished, of a sound with vibration or without. The tolling of a bell sounding for a long time the same note, at equal intervals, may produce a profound and solemn impression, and there are moments when the three beats of the recall, repeated on the drum, cause all faces to grow pale.

But what then is rhyme, the talisman of the poet, save the intentional reiteration of the same sound, and this reiteration lends so much charm to poetry, that the pleasure of the ear is more vivid when the repetition is immediate, as in this stanza from "*Les Orientales*:"

"Elle est là, sous la feuillée,
Éveillée
Au moindre bruit de malheur,

Et rouge pour une mouche
Qui la touche
Comme une grenade en fleur."

Yes, this intentional repetition, which is rhyme, constitutes the ennobling power of the poetic vesture of ideas.

Every one knows the effect produced in literature by repetition, and how much it adds to the cry of passion, or to the fascination of oratory. The force of the imprecations of Camilla, in Corneille's tragedy, is owing to the repetition of the word *Rome*, and when Mirabeau cries; "La banqueroute, la banqueroute est là! et vous délibérez!" he just redoubles the striking effect of his eloquence.

So it is in the art of the painter, and in that of the sculptor. When we survey the ancient monuments of Egypt, abounding as they do in coloured reliefs or surface paintings, we are often arrested by a group of figures in simultaneous and rhythmical action, all executing the same movement, the same gesture, and the same sign. When this action is not purely material, such as leading animals, threshing out corn, or carrying bricks; when this action, I say, is in harmony with the sentiment, when it expresses for example, worship or prayer, or the humility of a band of weeping captives prostrating themselves at the feet of the conqueror, their hands raised to him in supplication, this rhythmic movement partakes of a religious character, and the repetition of the gesture seems to bring it within the pale of sacred rites. The spectacle becomes solemn, nay, almost sublime.

Can we wonder then that rhythm should have so much

influence on the decorative arts, and that the repetition of an unimportant figure, of a moulding insignificant in itself, should possess the marvellous property of forming an agreeable, significant, brilliant, and striking ornament.

Here we not only touch upon one of the most essential conditions of human existence, but upon one of the great laws of universal life, where we see years repeat themselves eternally, marked by the constant recurrence of the seasons; days, marked by the perpetual return of dawn and twilight; and nights, marked by the interval which separates the twilight from the dawn. Once more it is only by our inner consciousness and by our memory that we are cognizant of these great laws. The order which governs the progression of the universe, and in particular the movements of our own planet, does not fall within the range of our senses; while on the contrary, the order that nature observes in the creation of her lesser works, appeals to our bounded vision and yields it a refined pleasure. So the regularity which constitutes the ornament of the universe is a source of admiration to our mind only, while the beauty of the humblest flower gives enjoyment to our understanding and our sight.

There is no principle which appears more frequently in the ornamental works of nature than repetition, and next to repetition, alternation.

ALTERNATION.

Variety is, like repetition, one of the great laws of the universe, and these two great laws are combined in alternation, which is in fact a blending of repetition and

variety. There may be repetition without alternation, but there can be no alternation without repetition. Alternation then, is the succession of two different objects recurring regularly in turn. If, for example, a circle be placed after a square, and this is repeated a certain number of times, we shall have an alternation of figures. If we put in a piece of stuff, a stripe of blue by the side of a stripe of green, and if this juxtaposition be several times repeated, we shall have an alternation of colours.

The order in which the appearance and the disappearance of light succeed each other periodically, is an alternating repetition which naturally brings about the invariable alternation of waking and sleeping hours, of activity and repose; and as this law is inherent in human nature, we must expect to see traces of it in everything that emanates from man. As the soil cannot long nourish the same plant, and requires a rotation of crops, so man is compelled from fear of satiety to vary the nourishment for his body, as well as the food for his mind, and the necessity of breaking through fixed habits is almost as closely bound up with his happiness as is the necessity of following them. Alternation therefore is to be found in other arts besides those which relate to decoration.

The poet, for example, will increase the spirit of his rhymes by crossing them, that is to say by making a feminine follow a masculine rhyme, as in these lines :

“ Les vierges au sein d'ébène,
Belles comme les beaux soirs,
Riaient de se voir à peine
Dans le cuivre des miroirs.”—V. H.

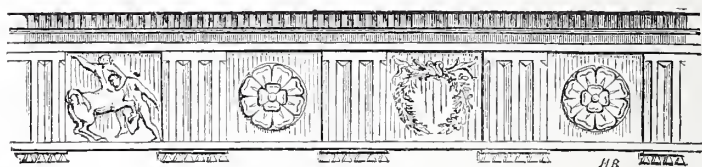
Not satisfied with variegated flowers, the gardener often likes to vary his borders with anthemis and heliotrope alternately, or it may be with an alternation of scarlet and crimson geraniums.

Music, so despotically governed by the principle of repetition, owes sometimes a great deal to alternation. In the opera of the *Muette* when we come to the air written to these words :

“ Conduis ta barque avec prudence,
Pêcheur, parle bas ;
Jette tes filets en silence,
Pêcheur, parle bas :
Le roi des mers ne t'échappera pas,
Le roi des mers ne t'échappera pas,”

the ear is pleased by a light phrase which alternates with a graver one, and the theme loses itself to perfection in a brilliant repetition.

The Greek architect gives animation to the aspect of the Doric frieze by a succession of triglyphs and

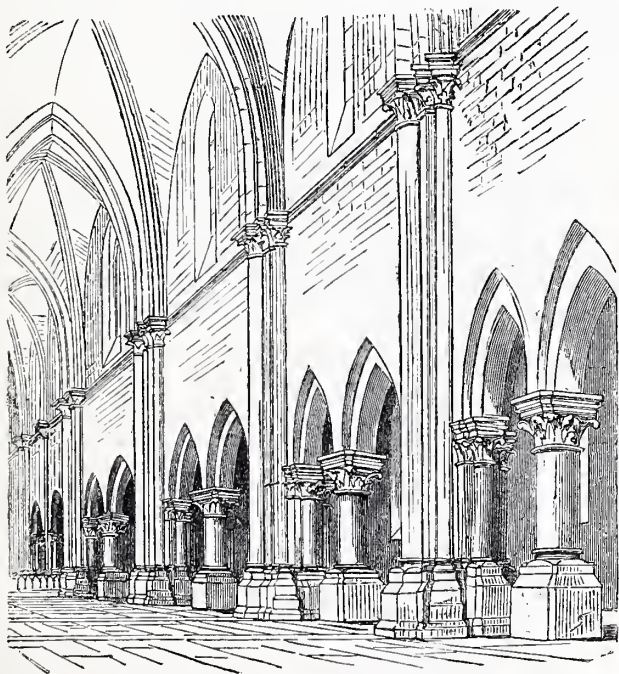


TRIGLYPHS AND METOPES.

metopes, and to give a marked distinction to the difference between these two repeated ornaments, he carves on the metopes, combats, horses, centaurs, or else pateræ or chaplets, so as to bring out more clearly by the opposition of curved lines the rigidity of the vertical lines of the triglyph. Moreover, we must not forget, that the

word alternation comes from *alter*, another, and consequently owes its origin to that taste for variety which is perhaps as keen in the human mind as is the love of repetition. It is to meet this taste that the neck of the Ionic column is so often ornamented with palm leaves alternating with the "lis marin," and terminated by a border of beads, or more correctly speaking, by a chaplet composed of almonds and olives, each olive being followed by two almonds.

To the same principle may be referred the plan of



EXAMPLE OF ALTERNATION IN ROMANESQUE ARCHITECTURE.

construction so frequent among the Arabs, in which layers, alternately of white and black marble, or else

painted white and red, give variety to the appearance of certain edifices, such as the mosques of Cairo and the walls of Damascus. In Romanesque architecture, the artist loves to decorate his arcades, sometimes by an alternation of projections, sometimes by an alternation of colours. When he wishes to break the continuity of the massive pillars of a long nave, which would otherwise obstruct the view, he places an isolated column after each of the pillars flanked by four columns, and by thus piercing the line of supports he allows the eye to see through and lose itself in the obscure depths of the side aisles. In this manner he obtains by alternation a poetical effect as well as the pleasure the eye derives from variety.

The manufacturer of striped tissues makes use of two alternate colours, sometimes boldly contrasted, as in yellow stripes side by side with violet, sometimes alike in colour but differing in shade, as in dark and light blue.

Occasionally in stuffs of a single hue, variety is gained by the mere contrast of brilliancy and dulness, as when for instance, a black dress has stripes of a satin-like lustre, alternating with stripes of a dull tone like velvet.

The Egyptians who made more use of repetition than of alternation, did not however discard this latter mode of decoration in the ceilings and cornices of their temples, or in their pottery and jewellery. We find amongst them vases decorated all round the neck, with animals alternately red and black; and jewels composed of an eye and a cross alternately. Sometimes the alternation is so complicated that the same figure or the same colour only recurs after several others, but always in

regular order and at equal distances. A band of yellow for example, will be followed by three bands, one of light green, one of red, and the other light blue, and this order being repeated all along the scotia, the band of yellow, supposing it were the first in order, will re-appear the fifth, the ninth, the thirteenth, and the seventeenth.

Unity may in this manner alternate with different numbers, but only on condition that these numbers shall not exceed, or scarcely exceed, the numbers below ten; otherwise we should not be sensible of the alternation, and the periodical return of the same figure or the same colour, ceasing to arrest our attention, would only have the appearance of a caprice or a whim.

Lastly, the simple disposition of the subject may introduce an agreeable variety into that which is only repetition. This is the effect produced by a series of stars, bouquets, or flowers arranged in lozenges in the pattern of a wall-paper, imitating the order of trees planted in a quincunx. Each floret in this case will be at the extremity of a V or in the centre of an X, in such a way that it follows and forsakes alternately the vertical line on which it was at first placed. Thus it may happen that the distribution of the subject without any variety of either figure or colour, may break the uniformity of a decorated surface, so much so as to resemble an alternation. There are in the Basilica of Saint Mark, at Venice, pavements which represent white lozenges disposed on a red ground, following lines intersecting each other at right angles, in such a manner that the lozenge is sometimes on one line, sometimes on another, or if you will, sometimes vertical sometimes horizontal. From its

arrangement therefore, the design of this mosaic may be said to hold a place between the two styles and to belong to both of them.

We have already seen of what importance in decoration is the economy of its subjects, since the character of the design may be entirely changed without the slightest alteration of either the figures or the colours of which it is composed, merely by a movement as on a chess-board, and may excite different sensations, or awaken in the mind fresh thoughts simply by the inclination or the reversal of the figure.

In its relation to feeling, alternation is less elevated in its character than repetition: the latter may be almost sublime, the former never passes the limits of beauty. Variety in unity is in fact one of the sources of beauty, but if alternation has more piquancy and charm, repetition has more grandeur. When we hear in Egypt the monotonous music of the Arabs, which consists in the perpetual repetition of a few notes, and which has so happily inspired the author of *Le Désert*, the impression, at first gay and lively, becomes gradually grave, and finally solemn: one forgets the dance, nay, even the music itself, and the mind is plunged into a deepening reverie, which changes what at first was pleasure into a sort of mental intoxication, and leads the Almées on to the delirium of the dance and the dervishes to their ecstasy.

SYMMETRY.

Passing from the vegetable to the animal kingdom by means of those insensible transitions we so often

find in nature, we see a constant reproduction of a species of repetition which, without being absolutely new, is altogether singular,—I mean *symmetry*. When we are brought face to face with a living being, it seems to be composed of two parts which have been united down a central line, and these two parts, alike, without being identical, correspond in such a manner that the right side if folded over the left would cover it exactly, in the same way as one hand can cover the other. This similitude, or rather this perfect correspondence, is just that which we generally call symmetry.

But the original meaning of the word symmetry, according to its Greek etymology, meant the state of a body of which all the members have a common measure amongst themselves (*σὺν μέτρῳ*); that is to say, it signified what we mean by proportion. Moreover these two things have so near a relationship to each other, that the words proportion and symmetry are almost interchangeable, because a symmetrical animal is always well-proportioned, and a well-proportioned animal is always symmetrical. Lastly, in a more general and extended sense, we give the name of symmetry to any disposition of several objects arranged in a perceptible and pleasing order.

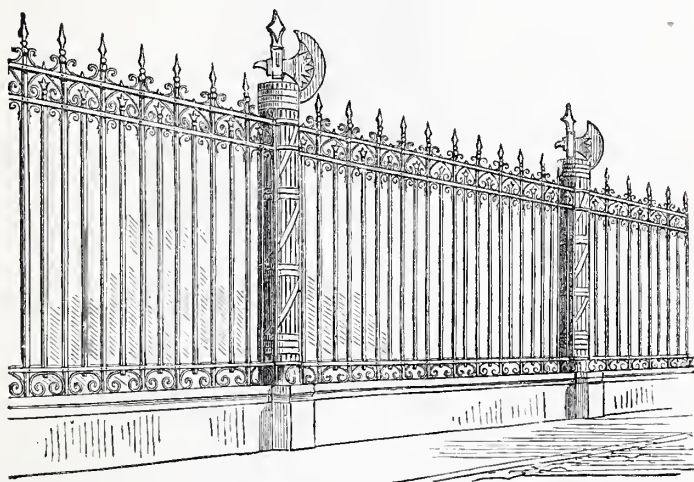
The human figure, I mean the external conformation of the human body, having been constructed on a symmetrical plan, man desires to find outside himself the order of which he is in his own person so striking an image. More than that, symmetry exists in his mind as well as in his body, since the organ of his judgment, which is reason, obeys a kind of moral equilibrium which

is logic. A decoration, without symmetry, or at any rate without a latent balance, would appear to us one-eyed or halting, and so would offend our sight as not being in accordance with our understanding. A temple having its principal entrance in a corner of the building, would seem to us outrageous, because its façade would bear no resemblance to the aspect of the human face. If it is the rule that the anterior peristyle of an edifice be always composed of an even number of columns, it is in order that the intercolumniations, three, five, seven, or nine in number, may have a centre where the great door should be placed.

This need of symmetry in an edifice is so imperative, and has been so keenly felt by artistic nations, that the Athenians the better to mark the central point of the façade of the Parthenon, took care that the space between the middle columns should be wider than between the others, while to right and left of the door the columns were closer and closer together. The architect, instead of making symmetry apparent by equal spaces as is done in the present day, accomplished his purpose in an artistic and striking manner, by the equal repetition of unequal distances. We are speaking here of the decoration of public buildings, for private houses may sometimes dispense with symmetry when there exists a necessity for its abandonment. We have an example of this in the Hôtel Pourtalès, at Paris, built near the Madeleine, from the design of M. Duban. This distinguished architect, having only a narrow plot of ground at his disposal, boldly and skilfully avoided placing the door in the centre of the building, lest

symmetry should oblige him to pierce the façade with apertures too mean or too near together, or the internal arrangement should be upset by the studied regularity of the exterior. But the world in general so keenly desire symmetrical arrangement, that we see houses every day with false windows, simply out of deference to public taste.

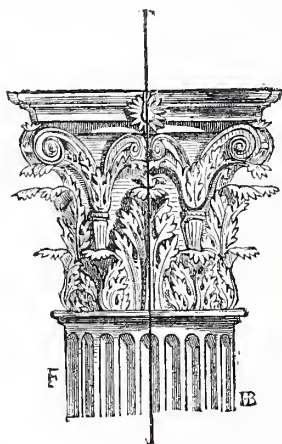
One method of introducing symmetry into an ornament which as yet is only marked by repetition, is by introducing *intersection*. Ziegler (*Études Céramiques*) gives this name to that style of ornament produced by one object intersecting another. For example, if the



EXAMPLE OF REPEATED INTERSECTION.

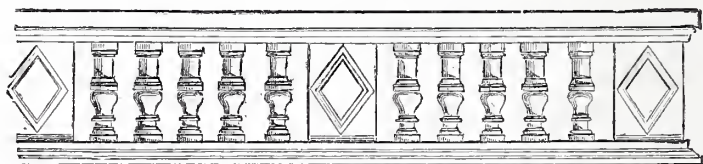
series of spears composing a railing be interrupted by a fasces or a pillar surmounted by a vase, the fasces or the pillar will form an *intersection*. So with the pilasters which break at regular intervals the continuity of a balustrade, like that with which Perrault has crowned

the façades of the Louvre. The eye or the rose which cuts the horizontal divisions of the abacus in the Corinthian capital is a happy example of intersection, because while indicating a centre or a vertical line between two similar and corresponding parts, it introduces a perceptible symmetry on the face of the capital.



SIMPLE INTERSECTION FORMING SYMMETRY.

In fact, when the intersection is repeated, it may be regarded as a form of alternation, for the pilaster inter-



EXAMPLE OF REPEATED INTERSECTION.

secting a balustrade, and the fascies intersecting a railing, really alternate with a set of balusters and a set of spears; but, in this case, symmetry is made more apparent by means of repetition, since we have over and over

again two rows of spears equal in height and size, one to the right and one to the left of each fasces, which answers to the common definition of the word *symmetry*. It seems to us then that Ziegler is mistaken in reckoning intersection among the principles of ornamentation. It is clear in fact from the examples that we have given and from those that he gives, that the intersecting object forms a kind of alternation when it is repeated, and of symmetry when it is singular.

What is true of architecture, considered as decorative beauty, is no less true of those ornaments with which we enrich the objects that give a charm to our habitations and our everyday life. Pavements, carpets, hangings, wall-papers, pottery, and iron-work, are all subject to the same law, so much so that even those artists who seem to have purposely forgotten it, like the Japanese, are not without respect for it, as shown in their substituting with delicacy and taste, equilibrium for symmetry, for the love of order co-exists in the human mind with the strongest desire for freedom. If we compare a Greek or Chinese with a Japanese vase, however different the styles of decoration may be, they will bear a distant but appreciable resemblance to each other, in this sense, that the Japanese artist, much less faithful to symmetry than the Greeks and the Chinese, will nevertheless have preserved a secret balance in the extreme whimsicality of his composition. See him lay, as if by chance, on a lacquered tray or a porcelain plate, this or that design, which will extend over one corner only of the ornamented surface : he will seldom fail to put in the vacant space, a crane, a blackbird, or a line of thin clouds, which will

be enough to balance the picturesque view, and prevent it, so to speak, from falling to pieces.

The design of a pavement, whether it be simply repeated or its effect heightened by alternation, must be symmetrical, because the eye likes to find either in the intersection of the dominant lines, or in a central figure, the diagonals of the pavement if it is rectangular, and the point of convergence of its rays if it is circular.



EXAMPLE OF A CIRCULAR PAVEMENT.

By discovering a symmetrical arrangement in the pavement of a vestibule, for example, the spectator concludes that the axis of the pavement is identical with, or parallel to, the axis of the building. Made evident to him by this symmetry, the unity of one part of the building leads him to understand the unity of the whole. The better to comprehend this fact, which, however, scarcely needs demonstration, let us imagine in the pavement of a square hall, a star placed outside the centre, or else

compare a corner paved in squares with a semicircle the pavement of which is fan-shaped.

Symmetry, like repetition, whenever it strikes the eye, has something about it grave and imposing. It is, *par excellence*, the ornament of civil and religious ceremonies; it lends a national solemnity to the combined movements of a squadron, and to the evolutions of an army. This it is which gave an air of majesty to the gardens of Lenôtre, and which mingled dignity with grace in the minuet of our ancestors. This it is which, strengthening the spirit of order and of family union, makes us feel instinctively in a private house the calmness and worth of its inhabitants; this it is, lastly, which gives the greatest distinction to the festivities with which we wish to do honour to esteemed or illustrious guests.

PROGRESSION.

A poet stretched on the grass and indulging in dreams of reverie is gradually aroused by an indistinct noise, which though it as yet appears very distant, makes him listen attentively. It seems to him that this noise increases insensibly, and draws nearer. Casting his eyes around him, he perceives a storm gathering on the verge of the horizon, and which the wind is driving towards him. The clouds advance, the distant mutterings become more frequent and less indistinct. The sun disappears, the day grows gloomy, the sky is overcast, the darkness increases, the sound is more and more distinct; and at last the storm breaks forth, the clouds are rent asunder, and after a terrific rolling, the thunder clap bursts. . .

Here we have a description of increasing progression in the sublime decorations of nature.

But such a progression is not perceptible all at once ; for it we require the lapse of hours, and a continued series of impressions, which is not so in the case of ornaments invented by man : they must be seen like a picture, *d' une seule fenêtre*, to use the words of Leonardo da Vinci, or at least they must be perceived in their entirety, so that the mental gaze may have anticipated them before the eye has seen them in their completeness, otherwise unity would be wanting, and where unity is wanting there is no art.

Let us suppose a series of colours from the darkest to the lightest, disposed in stripes on a surface which we wish to ornament, ranging, for example, from the darkest violet to the most brilliant yellow, or, if we please, from simple black to pure white : we shall have here an increasing progression, which, viewed reversely, would be a decreasing progression. "When the branches of a plant," says Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, "are disposed on a uniform plan of diminishing size, as in the pyramidal shape of the pine, there is progression. And if these trees be placed in long avenues diminishing in height and colour, as each tree does in itself, our pleasure is redoubled, because progression here becomes infinite. It is owing to this instinct of infinity that we take pleasure in looking at anything that presents progression to us, like nurseries in different stages of growth, the slopes of hills retreating to the horizon at different levels, interminable perspectives. . . ."

Perspectives ! these are nothing more than highly

attractive examples of progression, which, when made use of in the decoration of a theatre, produce an illusion always delightful. Here again the natural phenomena of optics have taught us a science of which the genius of ornament has made an art. When we see at the extremity of the great enclosed court of a palace, an avenue of trees lengthening out the space or the distance as far as the



EXAMPLE OF PROGRESSION IN PERSPECTIVE.

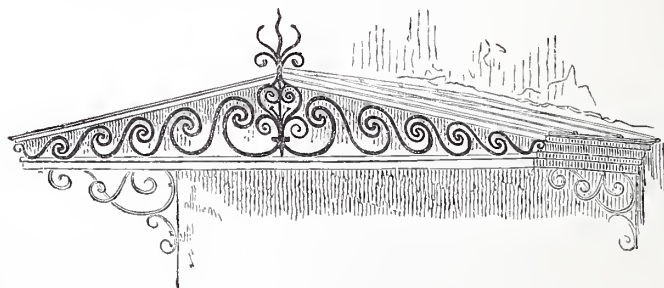
eye can reach, we experience sometimes a double pleasure, first of all that of being deceived, and then that of becoming aware of the deception.

And if the illusions of a simulated perspective are especially attractive when they hide the bareness of an indispensable wall, and change the appearance of a solid surface which would have offended the sight—one sees many examples of this at Bologna,—how could we do without the illusion produced by progression in the real

perspective of a large garden, when a straight avenue leading to a group of statues, a summer-house, or a grotto, gives to the eye the poetic pleasure which belongs to the indistinctness of distant objects, and the mysterious effect of depth.

There is no more suitable decoration for pyramidal surfaces, such as pediments, than a progressive ornament. The triangle formed by the front of the awning which shelters, with its glass roof, the steps leading to a door would be more suitably ornamented by an increasing and decreasing progression of a single figure, than by an ornament of volutes, some in one direction and some in another: the former of these ornaments would add to the effect of progression that of an intentional repetition, made more remarkable by being progressive; the latter would simply be a meaningless jumble of twisted iron intended to fill up a blank space.

This artifice of progression is universally employed: the architect, the poet, the musician, and the orator



EXAMPLE OF PROGRESSIVE ORNAMENT.

make use of it to produce impressions which would be unattainable without it. Jacob's mysterious ladder was

a progression that appeared to the patriarch in a dream and raised his thoughts from earth to heaven. The pyramids of Lower Egypt, built as they are in steps, are examples of the principle of progression, as are also the terraces in tiers of the gardens of Semiramis at Babylon, and the interminable stairs which led to the platforms of Persepolis—in fact the greater number of monuments designed in former times to embellish not only towns but also provinces. Again, have we not an example of progression in the swelling rhythm used in dramatic music, that *crescendo* which gently possessing itself of the least responsive soul, and warming it by degrees without giving it time to recover itself, causes it to rise with irresistible power to the paroxysm of passion as expressed by the crashes and outbursts of the orchestra?

In written and in spoken language, there are similar artifices made use of to carry away the mind from one extreme to another, from the most peaceful to the most terrible of ideas. A grave moralist, Boiste, in the dictionary which bears his name, gives this fine specimen of progression—"Temper leads to impatience, impatience to anger, anger to rage, rage to violence, violence to crime, and by this progression we pass from an arm-chair to the scaffold."

Smoother and more simple in character are the progressions made use of by the decorative artist. To speak correctly, this element is only employed in the decoration of buildings and towns, or else to give a lofty expression to national festivals, or to those great ceremonies intended to inspire a nation with a feeling of its dignity, and to give it an idea of its duty to justice and

to itself. In the celebrated festival of the Supreme Being, of which Louis David had the arrangement, the altar of *la Patrie*, placed on the summit of a mountain, formed the termination of a progression which was imposing when the members of the Convention were seen advancing majestically and ascending slowly, carrying bouquets of ears of corn and flowers.

Progression then is only a mode of setting the mind in motion, and carrying it, in spite of itself, to a point where it will receive a strong impression which would not have struck it unawares or without preparation. It is for the artist a royal progress, whether he gives size to a garden by means of retreating lines, or imitates the skill of the Egyptian architect, who led the eye through solemn avenues of sphinxes to the portals of the Theban temples, and afterwards by rows of columns to the doors of closed and dim sanctuaries.

CONFUSION.

Although Order is the sovereign law of the decorative arts, Confusion may also play a useful part in ornament and even come into operation as an equivalent of Order itself. "A fine disorder is often an effect of art," says Boileau, but before he had said this, Nature had shown it. By the charm which she has thrown into the careless foliage of the trees, by the way in which she has spotted the granite, variegated the jasper, and embellished marbles with irregular veins and unexpected touches of colour, she has presented us with charming models of decorative confusion. Every day we see women pass by dressed in Astracan fur, the sole beauty of which consists in the

confused arrangement of the hair, which, naturally curled, is divided into irregular ringlets, turning in every direction, and forming brilliant wavelets on a black ground.

The leaf of the St. John's wort is ornamented with exquisite delicacy, when we see in the sunlight its little transparent points which give it the effect of being pierced with a thousand holes. But it is essential to remark that in this example, as in others, confusion should be balanced, that is to say, should have a latent equilibrium running through all the ornaments scattered upon the object ornamented. If these transparent points were not distributed upon the perforated leaf so as to shine a little everywhere, if all the large holes were on one side and all the small ones on the other, the balance would be defective, and the eye, therefore, offended. That which is a delicate ornament would be nothing more than a curious freak.

Looking at certain frescoes of Raphael as simple mural decoration, we become aware of this law, the knowledge of which the great painter possessed intuitively; and we admire the way in which the numerous figures of *The School of Athens*, which seem, some of them to be accidentally isolated, and others to be grouped by the mere chance of a sympathy of feeling or a casual encounter, really form masses which, in spite of their apparent want of arrangement, balance each other, and supply what was wanting in symmetry.

Let us remember, however, that it is not for man to employ confusion as a decorative element with the same freedom that appears in the works of Nature on a large

scale. The country, which in the spring is covered with buttercups, primroses, and blue hyacinths, has no regular boundaries of its own. If agriculture and the jealousy of property had not divided and enclosed it with formal divisions, it would present no order in its outlines. Confusion in this case is not only in the flowers sown in the tender green with no apparent regularity, it exists also in the whole plan of the meadows. So it is with the stars scattered by handful in the skies by an invisible sower. So also with the woods with which Nature has covered spontaneously uncultivated tracts. If we look at them from an eminence we see a multitude of trees of different sorts, arranged at random, which have grown up in disorder close together or apart, scattered or in groups, and which nevertheless form an agreeable array, but as a decoration without beginning and without end. So the Confusion which embellishes the great spectacles of the universe is not redeemed by any design that we can possibly grasp : it forms part of a plan whose equilibrium escapes us, and whose immensity confounds us. On the contrary, the ornaments with which man embellishes his works would not have the appearance of disorder were they not circumscribed by a frame which marks the boundaries, gives regularity to the area, and thereby indirectly produces symmetry. When the Japanese artist ornaments the angles and corners of a box in black lacquer with a landscape in gold, he deems it useless to dispose his subjects in regular order, because he reckons on the regularity of the box to balance the whimsicality of a decoration so strangely distributed. The artist is at liberty to employ confusion because the

cabinet maker had kept in view geometrical arrangement.

I have seen at Cairo carpets which the Oriental colourist had sown with chrysanthemums on a quiet



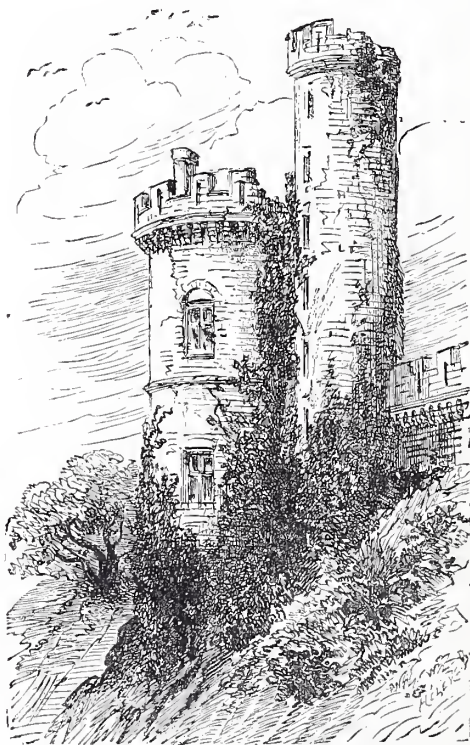
JAPANESE ORNAMENT.

ground, where varieties of green and dark yellow were blended, to imitate the effect of a meadow glistening with daisies like stars fallen from the sky on the grass; but the carpet was surrounded by a border, which framed, so to speak, this enchanting confusion.

Raphael, in that same fresco of *The School of Athens*, of which we have just spoken, has balanced, by the rigid lines of an architectural deception, the different movements which broke the uniformity of his plan. Michael Angelo also, in the ceiling of the Sixtine Chapel, has given the appearance of architectural compartments, to counter-balance, by the quiet of horizontal or vertical lines, the contortions of his writhing and tortured figures: in this

way these two great masters have preserved freedom in symmetry, and symmetry in freedom.

The human body, although it be the very type of order, exhibits nevertheless in its hair, especially when it curls, a natural disorder analogous to the confusion of the foliage of the trees. Thus Herder has compared the hair of a man to a sacred wood which covers the



EXAMPLE OF DECORATIVE CONFUSION.

mysteries of thought. To sum up, when we come upon an old tower in ruins in some deserted spot, if it is clothed with ivy and carpeted with moss, if it is adorned with a

wild vine with twisted stem, shoots climbing at random, and purple and golden foliage, we are pleased to find in the midst of such admired confusion the lines, still exact, of the battlements and loopholes, and the remains of symmetry in the mullions of the Gothic casement sprinkled with green and variegated with flowers.

In the hands of the designer, then, Confusion is only a method of rendering order invisible in a happy disorder. Here, as elsewhere, contraries meet, extremes touch.

Such are the principles of all decoration. It is enough to follow and combine them to give existence to ornaments as numerous as the sands of the sea, but which are either repeated, or alternated, or symmetrical, or progressive, or thrown into a confusion which is redeemed by a latent equilibrium.

But each one of these principles is accompanied by a secondary element derived from it, and which, multiplying the resources of the ornamentist, allows him to give an infinite variety to his combinations.

TO REPETITION	BELONGS	CONSONANCE;	<i>Har. 628 -</i>
„ ALTERNATION	„	CONTRAST ;	
„ SYMMETRY	„	RADIATION ;	
„ PROGRESSION	„	GRADATION ;	
TO BALANCED CONFUSION	„	DELIBERATE COMPLICATION.	

CONSONANCE.

In the arts which form the subject of this book, Consonance is that which reminds us of a dominant harmony. When the leaves of a plant are arranged round its branches, in the same way as the branches themselves

are arranged round the parent stem, as in the pine, there is consonance. "It is very remarkable," says Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, "that the most beautiful harmonies are those which have the most consonance. For example, nothing in the world is more beautiful than the sun, and nothing is more frequently repeated than its form and its light. It is reflected in a thousand ways by the refraction of the air, which makes it visible every day in all the horizons of the earth, before it has risen and after it has set; by parhelia, which sometimes reflect its disc three or four times in the foggy climate of the North; by rain clouds, in which its refracted rays form a bow of many shades of colour, and by the waters, whose reflections represent it in an infinity of places destitute of its presence, in the meadows, among the flowers covered with dew, and in the shade of the green forest. The sombre and uncultivated earth again reflects it in the transparent particles of grains of sand, micas, crystals, and rocks. She presents to us the form of its disc and of its rays in the disc and in the petals of a multitude of radiating flowers. And finally this beautiful luminary is itself multiplied indefinitely in a variety of ways unknown to us, in the numberless stars of the firmament, which the sun discovers to us as soon as he forsakes our horizon, as if he only hid from us the harmony of the earth to make us perceive the harmony of the heavens."

This passage from Bernardin de Saint-Pierre sufficiently explains the meaning of Consonance, and how the decorative artist, following the example of Nature, may make use of it. In ancient poetry, consonance was personified by that nymph, daughter of the Air, who, on

the banks of the Cephisus, repeated the last words that she had heard. Ornament has its echoes of form and colour, as music has its echoes of sound, literature its echoes of syllables, and painting its echoes of light.

Every one knows that in oratory, consonance, or, if you please, assonance, gives an incisive effect to words. It sets a seal to proverbs which are the echoes of experience, and impresses them more deeply on the memory. "If youth *knew*, if old age *could*—*He who lives will see—he who has lived has seen*"—these are consonances which throw thought into relief, and preserve it from oblivion.

Poetry, by redoubling its rhymes, produces a similar effect:—

"La voix grêle des cymbales,
Qui fait hennir les cavales,
Se mêlait par intervalles
Aux bruits de la grande mer."—V. H.

The great architect who built St. Paul's Cathedral, Sir Christopher Wren, has recalled the dominant feature of the edifice, the cupola, in the apse of the choir, and in the two small circular projections with their columns which form the porticoes of the side entrances.

Titian, Veronese, Rubens, those great colourists, have brought their tones into consonance by the repetition of their harmonies. In the famous *Assumption* of Titian as in the *Marriage of Cana* by Veronese, notwithstanding the apparent diversity of the tones employed, it is on the contrast often repeated, of a very few colours, a contrast sometimes prominent, sometimes subdued, that the magnificence of the spectacle in a great measure depends.

The colouring of Rubens, when well examined, is less harmonious, less striking, less fascinating, than the skill with which he has blended warm colours with cold tones, and cold colours with warm tones. Stop before a picture of Rembrandt: the light, or rather the fantastic gleam, which falls upon the principal figures, is reproduced indistinctly in the background by the softer half lights, which in their turn again throw a mysterious reflection on the shadowy figures, till at last the light becomes gloom, and the gloom becomes night.

However little taste he may possess, the upholsterer always contrives to have an echo to the dominant colour of the furniture in his other colours. He borders, for example, the yellow curtains of a room furnished in green with a green stripe, and *vice versâ*, the tassels and braid of green furniture he covers with yellow: this is the principle of Rubens. If he covers the walls with a hanging or paper, he is careful to choose a distinctive border, in which, nevertheless, the most striking colours of the hanging or the paper will re-appear in such a way as to soften down the contrast by harmony.

But it is especially in the dress of women, as we shall see by and by, that harmonious repetitions are essential; while at the same time there must be some intermixture of dissonance, delicately managed or skilfully accomplished.

CONTRAST.

If you make a red stripe follow an orange stripe in a stuff, you simply produce alternation; but if the stripes so placed are the complementary colours one of the other,

as orange and blue, yellow and violet, red and green, you will have a most lively contrast. In the same way, a series of circles and ovals would only present alternating forms; while a circle and a rectangle, a cube and a sphere, would be decidedly contrasting forms.

Contrast is then the highest degree of alternation. Nature uses it to distinguish her harmonies, to throw into relief the different characters of her works, to give spirit to her pictures, and brilliancy to her colouring. In a general way she contrasts the colour of the animal with that of the ground on which it lives. The verdure of the pastures contrasts with the colour of the ruminating animals spotted with white, fawn colour, brown or black, and the slate coloured plumage of the water wag-tail stands out on the skin of the flocks on which it settles. Flowering plants have, doubtless, green leaves; but there is no natural flower in the world of which the colour is green; so that the background which throws the flower into relief is at once brought to mind by a consonance, and distinguished by a contrast, or at any rate by a difference which sufficiently distinguishes the colours.

On the brown bark of trees, climbing birds, such as the titmouse, the lapwing, and the woodpecker, betray their presence, the last by a yellow rump and a red hood, the former by a black or blue head, and the other by the brown orange of its wings. Insects variegated with the prettiest colours, such as the butterfly, are always visible whatever may be the ground on which they settle. But the law of contrast is not universal in nature; and it often happens that animals, from the

colour of their skin or plumage, are confounded with the earth on which they live, as though to help them to escape the observation of enemies who might attack them. The hare, the lark, the partridge, are of an earthy brown colour; which contrasts, it is true, with the grass of the fields, but which allows them to conceal themselves between mounds of earth and become invisible to the sportsman. The camel is the colour of the desert.

Moreover, animals and plants possessing neither graceful forms nor beauty of colour do not need to be made visible by the force of contrast. Let the useful be known to us, that is sufficient. The beautiful alone should be seen, and clearly seen.

Therefore, man cannot always imitate nature in the arrangement of his ornaments. To adorn a person or a thing is not simply to cause them to be seen, it is to cause them to be admired; it is not simply to draw attention to them, it is to lead the spectator to regard the object or person beautified with feelings of pleasure. If contrast be needed, let it be used, on condition that it be used as a means of rendering the whole more powerful, brilliant, and striking.

If orange must predominate in a decoration, let blue be mingled with it, but sparingly, so that the complementary colour of orange may be its auxiliary and not its rival. A contrast of round and angular shapes would be displeasing in the highest degree if one of these forms competed with the other in importance, in volume, or in extent. Do you wish to give depth to a hall already deep, make it narrower, and the contrast obtained by the loss of width will increase the depth.

If the lights and shadows of a picture were distributed at regular distances, the effect would be cold, and would give no pleasure to the eye. So the great masters have invariably made contrast subordinate to the beauty of the whole. In Rubens we see the triumph of the gay effect of light, in Rembrandt the poetry of shade dominates.

Like all other creations of the human mind, the decorative arts are subject to this law—that two contrasting objects, far from disturbing unity, ought on the contrary, emphatically to strengthen it, by giving more play to that one of the two objects which we wish to bring into prominence. In music the accompaniment is a mode of contrast which supports the melody without overpowering it, and is moderated or subdued to give prominence to it. In the dramatic art, when the poet mingles some comic incidents with his most harrowing scenes, his aim is not to vary the impression, but to render sorrow more sorrowful, and tragedy more tragic.

RADIATION.

On entering St. Peter's at Rome, we perceive at the end of the basilica a golden light which casts its rays in every direction and shines forth in the midst of a Glory of angels. It is an invention of Bernini to illuminate by the transparency of a crystal the chair of St. Peter which is beneath the Glory, and to decorate in a magnificent manner the tribune of the church. Here we have an example of radiation applied to structural decoration in a manner which reminds us, no doubt, a little of the theatre, but is yet grand and imposing.

In the animal kingdom, radiation is a form of symmetry, but it differs from it in that all its parts are alike, while symmetry admits of the similitude of the bilateral members, and at the same time of the disparity existing between the upper and lower organs. That which in a symmetrical body is disposed along a vertical line, is in a radiating body ranged round a central point, but as it is easy to imagine an axis passing through the centre, we may thus reduce the radiating form at least to bilateral symmetry.

If symmetrical animals are superior to radiating animals, if symmetry—the perfect proportion of the human body—corresponds to what is most elevated, grand, and noble—thought; we must also acknowledge that radiation, by the very fact that it characterises the rudimentary works of creation, anterior to the appearance of man on our planet, belongs to epochs when the world presented nothing but spectacles of sublimity. It is by its rays that the splendour of the sun is manifested. It is by radiation that all the stars shine in the sky, and that the aurora borealis shoots forth in the depth of the night its luminous colours. Finally, when man himself raises his eyes to the constellations, or looks around him, it is by radiation that his soul puts itself into communication with the universe, and contemplates it from the depth of that camera obscura, the human eye.

But radiation appears in the smaller as well as in the greater works of nature. The spider's web is a tissue whose threads radiate; the ocean is peopled with ray-like zoophytes, such as star-fish, halcyons, and sea-anemones. Everywhere on the earth the dandelion flourishes with its

golden rays, and before they are honoured with a place in our gardens, the Easter daisy, the blue-bell, and the periwinkle adorn the fields and the woods with their star-like corollas.

Why then should not the decorative artist count the radiated form among the elements of his art? The gardener working on a grand scale, likes to make his alleys converge to a central point, distinguished by a column, a monument, a cascade or a fountain. By making several streets converge round a central space, the artist decorates a great town magnificently, and gives it importance. He knows the impression produced on a traveller who discovers in the heart of a forest a radiating centre from which the various paths retreat and are lost to view, and who finds himself surrounded by scenes full of deep poetic meaning. Sometimes, in a more limited area, his ponds have the form of a shell, sometimes the back of his trellised arbours spreads out like a fan.

And how frequently do we find radiation in interior decoration, whether it be in the ornamentation of a spherical vault or the embellishment of an apse, whether the intention is to give a happy form to the holy-water basin in a church, or to arrange artistically the pavement of a round, elliptical, or semi-circular hall! In the Pantheon at Rome, the vault of the cupola is ornamented with compartments which diminish in size in proportion as they approach the *eye*, that is to say the opening pierced in the top of the vaulted roof; and in this way converging curves follow each other so as to form a decoration which unites the grace of a curvilinear radiation with the charm of a decreasing progression. Under

the dome of the Invalides, at Paris, before the crypt had been excavated which was to contain the tomb of Napoleon, there was a marble pavement designed by Mansard whose radiating configurations corresponded with the arrangement of the vaulted roof, and recalled to mind the projections and recesses of the building above.

When a bird flies or hovers in the air, its extended wings form a radiation which the Egyptians happily imitated by carving a winged globe, sometimes in the concave moulding of the cornice which crowns the doors of their temples, sometimes on the smooth stonework which surmounts them. Every day we see great vases adorning the gardens or the vestibule of a palace, ornamented with elongated ovals (*gadroons*), which, starting from a pivot, follow the curves of the body of the vase, either in a vertical direction, or so as to form elegant spirals. Lastly, it is upon a principle of radiation that the goldsmith often works in ornamenting plate, and the watchmaker in tracing the curved lines on the back of a watch.

We shall have to notice by and by, how gracefully radiation may be applied to the dress of women, and to general decoration.

GRADATION.

Gradation is not quite synonymous with progression. The former of these two words invariably expresses what the latter sometimes fails to express, a series of adroitly managed transitions. Progression may be animated, and even irregular, gradation is never so.

As in the science of numbers we distinguish arith-

metrical from geometrical progression, so we must distinguish in speaking of design and colours, what is graduated from what is progressive. The terms 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, which preserve amongst themselves an interval invariably equal, bear no resemblance to the terms 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, which are separated by gradually increasing intervals. This is precisely the difference which exists between gradation and progression. The one resembles a slow, almost imperceptible advance, the other a series of steps which may either decrease or increase rapidly. The latter is a regular succession of changes, the former a linked series of shades.

In ascending or descending the scale of colours, like the gamut in music, if we pass from violet to yellow through all the intermediate hues, garnet, red, deep yellow, orange, and saffron, and if we descend from yellow to violet by sulphur, green, turquoise, blue, and sky-blue, we shall have an increasing and decreasing progression. But if you suppose all these colours slightly modified by chiaroscuro, that is to say by their combination with black and white, you will obtain for each of them a dull half tint, which making the colour vibrate on itself, would render the transition from the one to the other softer. Light green would precede pure green, which, followed by dark green will melt more easily into the varieties of blue. What was a progressive disposition will become a shaded gradation, like that which leads us through dawn to daylight, and through twilight to night.

The English, in the present day, sometimes decorate the interior of their rooms by substituting paint or stucco

for paper, and intermingle colours very finely blended, nor do they find any transition too delicate. It is not yet time to estimate this use of gradation in the art of which we are treating, but it is easy to see that all modes of ornament have a reason for their existence; that according to the feelings or sensations to be produced in the mind of the spectator, we should make use of abrupt contrasts, imperceptible progressions, or the tenderest gradations of colour.

The decorator may doubtless occasionally allow himself to use a striking and unexpected effect to start with, following the example of the orator who sometimes ventures on an abrupt exordium; but it is more natural to walk than to jump, and if the unexpected is more striking, graduated impressions are always grander and more desirable. There are persons who display all their treasures in the vestibule of their houses, and it is somewhat the fashion now a days to turn it into a museum, to such an extent that in passing through the antechambers to the reception rooms, the visitor, speedily disappointed, finds the luxury of the saloons in which he is received meagre and insufficient.

Like nature, who to use the words of Linnaeus, only advances by measured steps, *non facit saltus*, the mind of man finds more pleasure in gradations than in surprises. The poet, who rambling in the country, sees a village wedding pass by him, and hears with a smile the harsh music of the fiddlers, soon finds a certain charm in listening to this music, gradually softened by distance, and in resuming his peaceful reverie in proportion as the noise dies away and loses itself in silence.

COMPLICATION.

“Complication,” says Ziegler, “is another aspect of the art which owes its origin to the sentiment that Dædalus expressed in the plan of his labyrinth, Solomon, in his mysterious seal, the Greeks, in the interlacings of their winding ornaments, the Byzantines, the Moors, and the architects of our Cathedrals, in their finest works. Interlaced ornaments, mosaics, the intersections of arches and ribs, all spring from complication.”

We know not how to give a juster idea of complication than by defining it by well-chosen examples; for the word itself, like the thing which it signifies, is a little obscure.

To introduce complication into an ornament is to provoke the curiosity of the spectator and to rouse him to an investigation which promises to be of interest. Alexander, great as he was, when he cut the Gordian knot, only acted like a rough soldier. However little of an artist he may have been, he might have chosen to resolve by other means than by the sword, the graceful problem of that complication which is a charming irony in art and so familiar to the Orientals. When we see their cords so skilfully plaited, their ornaments in which straight and curved lines intermingle, cross, branch out, disappear and recur, to be lost again and again to re-appear, we experience a singular pleasure in unravelling a puzzle which appeared undecipherable, and in acknowledging that a latent arrangement has only complicated what at first, and at a distance, appeared an inextricable confusion.

The ornamental style of the Arabs, that style which

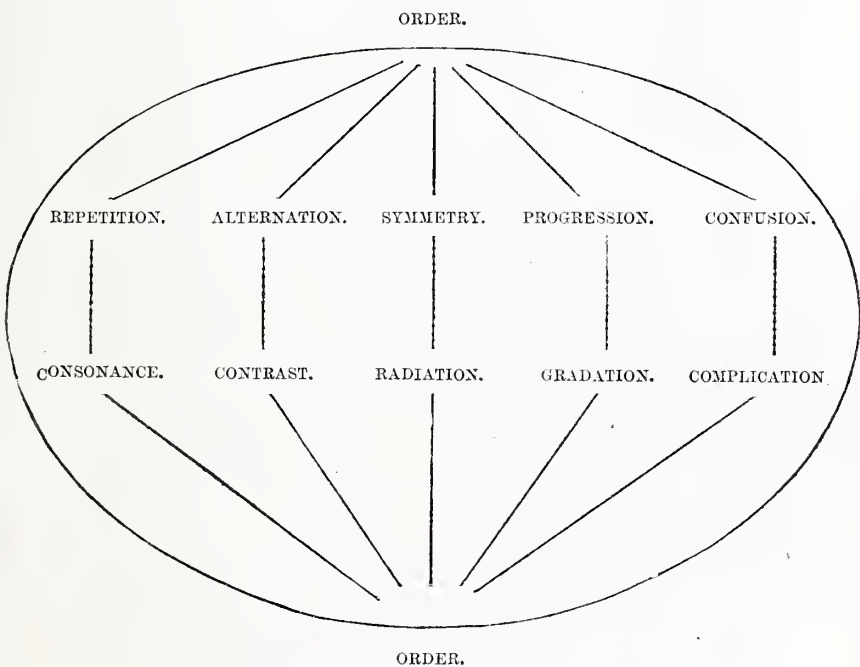
has created wonders in the mosques and houses of Cairo, was invented by the genius of complication ; but as this complication is generally originated by an entanglement of geometrical figures, it conceals a regularity which enables us to unravel the enigma. Sometimes a star, scarcely apparent, is repeated in the ornament, accompanied by smaller stars, and then we finally trace it through a maze of interrupted curves and broken lines. Sometimes, it is a polygon, of which all the sides form the chords of a circle, which the designer has effaced after having traced it, and then the radii cutting the circumference on points marked by the compass, are carried further in order, and changing their direction form smaller polygons connected among themselves by invisible trapeziums, so that by means of purposed turnings and windings, all these divergent radii resolve themselves into new convergences.

But when the surface ornamented according to Arabian taste has no dominant subject indicated by its isolation or by its colour, the spectator has only before him an assemblage, regularly confused, of triangles, lozenges, wheels, half moons, trefoils, imperfect pentagons and unfinished meanders, which penetrate, intersect, balance and correspond to each other, approach to retreat, and touch one moment to depart the next, and dissolve themselves in a labyrinth without outlet and without end.

The Arabs have thus realized the strange phenomenon which consists in producing an apparent disorder by means of the most rigorous order. Like their endless tales, in which imaginary events are woven and

mingled together, and in which we like to lose ourselves with the narrator, the web of their ornaments gives the mind the pleasure of having its curiosity excited, and the delight of unravelling the complication.

The following figure forms a mnemonic image of the truths developed in this Introduction and brings them before the eye.



The result of all that we have now said, summarily stated, is, that there is no decoration in the works of nature or the inventions of man, which does not owe its birth to one of the originating principles which we have enunciated, namely—repetition, alternation, symmetry, progression, and balanced confusion; or else to one of

these secondary causes,—consonance, contrast, radiation, gradation, and complication ; or, lastly, to a combination of these different elements, which *all* finally lose themselves in a primordial cause,—the origin of the movements of the universe, *order*.

DIVISION OF THE WORK.

AT a time when more interest than ever is felt in the decorative arts, at a time when everyone seems eager to occupy himself with them, it is somewhat strange that the object most worthy of ornamentation, the human figure, should be forgotten, and that we should not give our attention to ornamenting persons before decorating objects.

Read a list of the decorative arts : you will see in the first rank goldsmiths' work, pottery, carving in wood and ivory, engraving, the manufacture of weapons and carpets ; we also reckon amongst the professions which art ennobles, that of the jeweller, the glass manufacturer, the enameller, the worker in mosaic, in bronze, and in iron, and the bookbinder ;—but we shall find there no mention made of the man who invents a new style of dressing the hair, nor of her who designs costumes and fashions, as if as much, nay more taste were not required to devise a tasteful arrangement of the hair, to choose a material and adapt its form and colour to living beauty, to adjust laces, knot ribbons, arrange flowers and feathers, handle blond, tulle, and gauze, as to ornament a morocco binding, design a pavement, turn the iron of a railing, or invent a pretty keyhole.

Nevertheless, what a contrast between the grace of a living being and the beauty of a lifeless object. A vase,

a lustre, a lacquered tray, a chandelier, if artistically designed, are objects of pleasure to our sight, but nothing more ; but when we see a woman adorned both by nature and art, if we acknowledge to ourselves that she pleases us, we soon strive to please her, and this mutual feeling it is which suffices to make the embellishment of the human figure, beyond all other decoration, the most interesting, pleasing, and noble, because it bears on the sympathy of minds and the interchange of soul.

Our aim, then, in this work, is to begin with animate creatures, and following the order of the formation of the world we live in, to pass from the simple to the compound. The individual, the family, and society—such are the three aspects under which the human race is presented to us. It seems, therefore, natural to divide this book into three parts, the first of which will be devoted to the decoration of the person, the second to the ornamentation of the house, and the third to the decoration of towns and public edifices.

BOOK I.

THE GRAMMAR OF THE DECORATIVE ARTS.

PERSONAL ADORNMENT.

BEFORE entering upon this delicate, subtle, and attractive subject, we must repeat some of the ideas that we have put forward, in the *Grammar of the Arts of Design*, touching the æsthetic character of lines and colours.

It is scarcely credible, but it is with bare lines, with stiff geometry, that the study of personal adornment must begin. That beautiful woman who, unknown to herself, is enclosed in a network of inflexible parallels like a bird in its cage—an invisible trelliswork of horizontal and vertical lines confines the free play of her beauty. She appears to have been draughted by a Supreme Designer, who, effacing the right angles that he had traced to construct her figure, only left the grace of it to be seen.

The model of the human body being free, notwithstanding its symmetry, and symmetrical notwithstanding its freedom, we shall naturally look to find even in its movements the vertical and horizontal lines that the Designer has effaced, some trace of which nevertheless exists in the axes of the body, in the central line of the face, and in the parallelism between the eyebrows and the eyes, and the eyes and the mouth. But if by the

help of our imagination we supply these half vanished lines, or if we trace them anew, as they have at once a mental significance and a value appreciable by the sight, we cannot fail to catch the power of their twofold expression.

VERTICAL AND HORIZONTAL LINES.

I.

IN PERSONAL ADORNMENT, THE REPETITION OF VERTICAL LINES TENDS TO ADD HEIGHT TO THE FIGURE, AND THE REPETITION OF HORIZONTAL LINES TO ADD WIDTH TO IT.

We have said and proved in the *Grammar of the Arts of Design*, that vertical, horizontal, and oblique lines produce sensations as well as awaken feelings; but here we have only to consider them with regard to the judgment of our sight; I say *judgment*, because the eye of man, although an admirable instrument, is yet a very imperfect one, and would be led away by continual illusions and errors, if experience did not perpetually step in to rectify these errors, and put us on our guard against these illusions. Learned men have demonstrated, and our every-day observation confirms it, that the eye is not simply a passive organ of sensation, it is also the pupil of the judgment and feeling. It begins by being a defective instrument at the service of the mind, which in due course corrects and brings it to perfection, so that it may the better make use of it.

This being the case, let us examine what would be the impression produced upon us by seeing a repetition of vertical and horizontal lines.

The vertical line raises itself, the horizontal extends

itself; the one is erect, the other is prone. Therefore it is natural that these two lines should be connected with totally different ideas. What do we mean by the height of a body? We mean the number of degrees that it occupies on the vertical scale. A well grown man being five times as high as he is broad, presents a figure in which the direction of height is the one which strikes us; but in order that the height may impress us, the figure must be perpendicular to the ground.

On the other hand, animals, whose bodies are parallel to the line of earth, are always longer in the direction of that line than in the direction of height: this is true even of the elephant, although he is so thick set, that he might almost be said to be square. But no sooner do they raise themselves above the horizon than height predominates in the profile presented by their figure. The dog that is made to dance, the horse as he rears, the goat browsing on the leaves of a tree, change their dimensions so to speak, by becoming higher than they are long. And if the natural conformation of the animal makes his body follow an oblique line, his tendency towards a vertical line gives him immediately height instead of length. The giraffe, for example, may be said to be upright, because his hinder quarters being much shorter than his fore quarters, he almost appears to be erect. The same holds good with regard to trees and plants: most of them tend upwards, so their size is measured by height, while as to the plants which spread out their branches or creep on the ground, like the rhododendron and the mahonia, their leading dimensions are measured in a horizontal direction.

In architecture, the supports which are necessarily vertical, such as pillars, piers, and columns, are always higher than they are wide, however thick and short they may appear to be; on the contrary, the parts supported, however massive they may be, are more developed horizontally than in height. This is why we attach the idea of height to what is vertical, and the idea of width to what is horizontal.

This being the case, given two surfaces equal in dimensions, two circles for example, the one divided by vertical lines will appear a little increased in height, because by repeatedly insisting on the idea of height, these lines will direct our thoughts towards that dimension. Both circles will have a slight tendency to an oval, each in the direction of its lines. So, if we take two squares instead of two circles, the perpendicular lines will give height to the one, the transverse lines will give width to the other.

Let us at once say that physical experience may lead us to two different results. If the convexity of the eye be more decided from top to bottom than from right to left, vertical lines will be seen most clearly. If the eye on the contrary be more convex from right to left than from top to bottom, horizontal lines will strike it most. But here we must draw a distinction between *la vue-sensation* and *la vue-sentiment*, and quote as bearing on this subject the apposite observation of Voltaire,—“When I see a man five paces off, his diameter is double or nearly so what it was when I saw him ten paces off, and yet that man always appears to me the same size. Neither geometry nor physics can solve this

problem" (*Philosophie de Newton*). The truth is that our eye, instructed and schooled by our intelligence, has ceased to transmit to it illusions which it would not accept. The instrument, at first passive, has become as reasoning and sensible as its master.

Moreover, if science pursues exact truths, art exists on pleasant fallacies. The great engravers teach their pupils—my masters Calamatta and Mercuri so taught me—that the perpendicular lines at the bottom of a picture are those which are the best seen; that to tone down certain objects and make them recede, or to spread them out, like water, they should be represented in preference by level lines. Now there is no doubt that of two equal surfaces the most prominent would appear to be the largest, and this could only be in the sense which we have pointed out.

Women, who in their dress are artists, *par excellence*, have not consulted philosophers to know how to set off their beauty or hide their defects. They make use of *la vue-sentiment*, and are guided by it alone. You would never persuade a woman embarrassed by her height to wear a dress striped lengthways, nor a little woman to try to add to her stature by means of horizontal stripes. Women understand instinctively, in a wonderful way, that the attention should be drawn in a different direction to that of their defects. Our first proposition is for them an axiom.

We are then in possession of a primary law which can be applied both to persons and objects. The repetition of vertical lines on a surface gives height; the repetition of horizontal lines, width. Thus it is proved that

frigid and abstract geometry has a secret connexion with elegance, and may give counsels to beauty.

UNITY.

II.

IN DRESS AND ORNAMENT, UNITY IS AN ELEMENT OF SIZE.

The preceeding observations touching the education of the eye by the mind, authorise us in saying that aesthetics and pure physics are two sciences which are not always in perfect accordance, although doubtless they may be reconciled in a higher identity. Certain natural philosophers, particularly M. Laugel, the author of an interesting book called *L'Optique et les Arts*, the object of which is sufficiently explained by its title, maintain that the idea of size is inseparable for us from the idea of measure; that what is undivided always appears to us too small, that "of two lines of the same length, the one divided into a certain number of equal parts, the other undivided, the latter would appear the shorter."

If that were true, æsthetics would in this case be completely at variance with physics. Morally, to divide is to lessen. In the social scale, the division of inheritances has diminished the greatness of families. In the art of war, the surest method of weakening the enemy is to divide his forces, and common good sense has expressed these different truths by an adage—*Division, destruction*. It would be strange if the laws of the mind were so little in harmony with the laws of optics. Let us try and solve this problem, not by geometry, as Voltaire says,

but by æsthetic observation, that is to say by the decisions of feeling.

And in the outset we must make a distinction. The philosopher may be right as regards a very extended surface, such as we see sometimes represented in architecture. Let us imagine, for instance, an unbroken wall, 325 feet in length by 65 feet in height: the eye will have no means of measuring its size, for to measure you must have something to measure by, an object of comparison, a scale. Imagine on the other hand, in this extended surface a door, some windows, or a man standing by the side of the wall, and we shall at once have an object of comparison which will enable us to calculate in our mind the colossal dimensions of the wall. Again, at whatever point the spectator may be placed, the superficies of the wall, by an effect of perspective, will present foreshortening more or less considerable, according to the point from which it is seen. If the wall be unbroken, the eye will glide over the surface and a portion of the extremities will be lost. If on the contrary the wall is divided by pilasters or abutments, the rays of vision being arrested and caught by the succession of reliefs will take in the wall to the very end by means of the divisions that light and shade will make apparent; and the most distant part of the wall, which otherwise would almost have escaped being seen, will be much less lost to sight on account of the projections and recesses which will cause it to be more distinctly noticed.

For the same reason the great basins which ornament gardens and parks, such as those which we see at the Tuileries, at Versailles and Saint-Cloud, appear smaller

than they really are, if they present an unbroken surface, without anything to interrupt the level, without fountains, or sculpture on the water, or any of those breaks which, like a swan or two, would arrest the vanishing perspective, and give us some known magnitude with which to compare the size of the basin. It is true then that vast surfaces may give the impression of increased size, simply by being unbroken.

Still, that which is apparently increased is the size of dimension rather than the aesthetic size, it is the size that is *seen*, rather than the size that is *felt*. We need not, therefore, repeat what we have said concerning the sublime character of unbroken surfaces, such as the colossal masses of certain Egyptian porticoes, the Pyramids, and the level sea, which are all sublime in their indivisibility and awe-inspiring unity.

But if it be certain that great spaces seem greater still materially when they are divided, it is not so with regard to surfaces and bodies with whose proportions we are familiar. Now nothing is more familiar to us than the human figure, and to measure it with the eye we have no need either of a comparison or a scale.

Do we wish to make it clear to ourselves that division lessens, unless it be in the direction of height, we have but to compare the woman whom we surprise in her morning wrapper with the same woman wearing a dress fitted to her figure, the outline of her form broken by her corsage and girdle, and decked with ribbons. The effect of height will be still more striking if the wrapper is quite plain, I mean if it is not broken up by a variety of colours. But what is unity of tone but an unbroken

surface of colour? Besides our second proposition is related to our first and confirms it. The repetition of vertical lines, we have said, gives height, and why? Because it divides the width. And the repetition of horizontal lines gives width, and why? Because it divides the height. Now if it be granted that division diminishes height in one case, and width in another, may we not reasonably conclude that indivision should produce the contrary effect? And who does not feel that it is with the idea of adding to their height that priests wear a cassock all of a piece and of one colour?

AMPLITUDE (OR WIDTH).

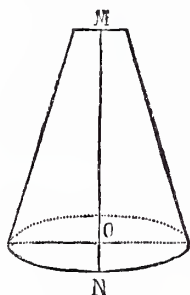
III.

AMPLITUDE, IF NOT EXAGGERATED, ADDS TO THE HUMAN FIGURE BOTH
A MENTAL AND AN OPTICAL SIZE.

Every one knows how tall a man appears when disguised as a woman, and how small a woman appears when she assumes the garb of a man. It is easy to conceive the reason of this. It results both from an optical illusion and an error of the imagination.

In the first place, the male costume presents, in the lower part of the body, lines which are parallel in a vertical direction, if the man is standing and motionless. The legs covered with trousers form, so to speak, two long cylinders; but covered with a petticoat the two cylinders would disappear beneath a garment having the form of a truncated cone, and the vertical lines would be replaced by oblique ones. Now, according to this axiom of geometry that the oblique is longer than the perpen-

dicular, the line that extends from the waist to the ground is considerably longer in a figure in a petticoat than in a figure in trousers, or close fitting breeches, because the eye measures the length of the line by following the oblique line from the waist to the bottom of the dress, and does not perceive the point where the feet



really terminate. If the line, MO , perpendicular to the ground, measures the true distance from the waist to the heel, the eye prolongs this line to the point N , and replaces the line OM , which it cannot see, by the line NM . If the dress be still further lengthened by a train, the optical illusion will be increased, but only to that point where the train, assuming a horizontal line, will break the oblique folds of the dress, and so determine the length.

It is certain then, that physically, the fulness of a woman's dress is a trick which gives height, and this is so true that when fashion exacted that the dress, having become what is called a *costume*, made short and drawn tight round the hips, should fall on both sides in almost vertical lines, women appeared much smaller, and soon

abandoned a fashion which dwarfed them and made them insignificant.

Besides, it is in the art of dress as in other arts, fulness produces an æsthetic effect, an effect of imagination, which tends to give size. A magistrate, in the ample folds of his gown, a woman in her puffed skirt and sleeves, give us the idea of important personages, simply because they occupy a certain space in the field of our vision, and because the eye needs more time to take in the figure on which it rests, and to measure it in every direction. A certain presumption of dignity is attached then to width, which enlarges because it is the opposite of scantiness, which diminishes.

But this is one of those subtle truths which requires a delicacy of comprehension. To exaggerate width would be to run counter to the proposed end, it would be to miss the goal by overstepping it; because excess, which can only be produced by an increase of size, would end in spreading out the figure and overwhelming it, unless in order to balance the enlargement of the figure that puffs and paniers would give it, a structure of curls and feathers were erected on the head, like those worn by the Princesse de Lamballe and Marie Antoinette, during the reign of powder.

Fulness then in dress, is a certain element of size, but conditionally on its not altering the natural shape of the human body, the outline of which ought always to give boldly the all prevailing direction of height. Confined within these bounds, amplitude produces an illusion of size, not only because it enlarges the image presented to our sight, but because it makes us instinctively attribute

increased importance to a person amply dressed and ornamented, by augmenting the place that it occupies in the mind, by reason of the space that it fills in reality.

COLOURS AND THEIR EXPRESSION.

IV.

HOWEVER VARIABLE MAY BE THE EFFECT OF COLOURS, EACH OF THEM HAS ITS DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER WHICH IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH OUR FEELINGS.

Colours and forms, so to speak, are the vowels and consonants of the silent language of creation, and both these terms are united in light, which makes us comprehend form and see colour, by giving relief to the one and qualities and shades to the other.

Nature does not always employ her two modes of expression; she has not given form to everything, neither has she coloured everything. The sky, the air, the mist, have colours which are bounded by no outline. Before the sun's disc is visible on the horizon, the dawn displays to us a casket of colours unfettered by any form; so that without traversing any design, the eye may pass from the whiteness of the dawn to the blackness of night, through golden yellow, orange, vermilion, purple, violet and that sombre blue which borders on the darkness. On the other hand, nature has delineated with precision certain forms without adding to them any colour that we can lay hold of, as for example, rock crystal, and carbonate of lime: we therefore call them *colourless*.

When the two expressions are united, there is always a dominant one, and whether it be form that prevails

over colour, or colour over form, it is not only to our sight that they both appeal, but to the innermost faculties of our soul. Without noticing the particular and purely local significations that different nations have attached to them, colours have human affinities and harmonize with our ideas, but especially with our feelings and our passions. This is why women, who are led by sentiment, attach more importance to colour than men do.

It is not by a mere arbitrary arrangement that we find gaiety in light, mystery and melancholy in the vagueness of shadow, and sadness in night. If there are countries like India and Southern China where white is an emblem of mourning, it is because the people of those countries are black or tawny, and because the decided contrast between black and white is hard and distressing to the sight. We may notice, further, that mourning is always symbolised by a *non-colour*, for so we may call both white and black, since all colours vanish in the one and are lost in the other.

A colour, no doubt, is a trifle in itself, and only has its full value when it is in contrast or harmony with other colours. Nevertheless, between these two extremes—white, which absorbs all the sun's rays, and black, which does not reflect any—each colour has an expression and a character peculiar to itself, and each is enlivened as it approaches its lightest shade by its mixture with white, just as it is saddened and perishes as it approaches its darkest shade by its mixture with black. As to pure black, if it be, in the dress of the grandees of Spain, a mark of nobility, and a symbol of pride, it is because the austere habit of the priest has of necessity appeared a

dignity and a privilege to that devout nation, who are as Christians humble, but as men, haughty.

Yellow is the eldest daughter of light, and we must not be astonished if such a nation of colourists as the Chinese look upon it as the most beautiful of colours. Without yellow, no spectacle can be splendid. With it nature has tinged the flesh tints of the races of mankind highest in her scale; with it she has coloured the most precious of metals, and those *plebeian* cereal grasses, as Linnæus calls them, which contain the most necessary articles of food—the ripe ears of wheat and rye, the seeds of maize, even the grains of barley, and that fine straw which, after having borne the ear, becomes an ornament, when plaited by women it forms hats which shelter them from the sun, and cast a golden shade over their complexion.

Striped with black, yellow characterises the covering of the most formidable of animals, and the most venomous of flies, such as the tiger, the panther, and the wasp; and this contrast of black and yellow is also much fancied in countries where the passions are hot and violent. It suits the Nubian and Arab women well; the Spanish women especially favour it, and it harmonises with the decided character of their black eyebrows and sparkling eyes, which express boldness and defiance as much as love.

Red is a favourite colour with all the nations of the world. As distant from yellow and white as it is from blue and black, it occupies a central position among the primary colours, and in it the evening and the morning meet and are united. Just as it gives life to the human

face by making the circulation of the blood transparent, so it animates all surfaces where it appears, and enlivens all the harmonies in which it plays a part. "It is by means of red," says Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, "that nature enhances the most brilliant of her beautiful flowers. With it she arrays the plumage of most of the birds of India, especially in the breeding season. At that time there are few birds to whom she does not give some shade of that colour. Some have their heads covered with it, like those birds called cardinals, others have patches of it on their breasts, others have necklets, others hoods, and others epaulets. Some there are that preserve the grey or brown ground of their feathers, but are glazed with red, as if they had been rolled in carmine; others are sprinkled with it, as if a scarlet powder had been blown over them."

Occupying a place between the liveliness of light and the quiet of dark colours, red has an expression of dignity, magnificence, and pomp. There is something imposing and terrible in the robe of a criminal judge. In the habit of the Princes of the Church, in the uniform of soldiers, in the dress of women, it is suggestive of pride, bravery, and licence. It asserts a strong will, it appeals to and provokes observation.

The expression of blue is one of purity. It is impossible to attach to this colour the idea of boldness, licence, or voluptuousness. Blue is an unobtrusive and imaginative colour, which, recalling the impalpable ether and the clearness of the calm sea, necessarily pleases the poet by its immaterial and celestial character. It does not yet suit, or it no longer suits, like golden and flame colour,

the time of love. It is, moreover, of all colours, that which ascends the highest, and descends the lowest in the scale of chiaro-oscuro. Nothing so much resembles white as light blue, so linen is bleached with blue, and nothing so much resembles black as dark blue—the *bleu d'Enfer* as dyers call it. The result is that this colour is more susceptible than others of approaching extremes, and thereby changing its character. It may be suitable in its light shade for the dress of an innocent maiden, and in its dark for romantic affections and evening thoughts. It seems in this latter case to indicate a mind which is beginning to withdraw itself from the realities of life, and to incline to solitude, mystery, and silence.

The complementary colour of blue, orange, corresponds to other feelings. A mixture of light and heat, of yellow and red, orange plays a brilliant part in the decoration of the universe. It gives life to the harmonies of the dawn, and mingling with the dramatic scene of declining day, it adds its numberless vibrations to the endless novelty of spectacle which the sinking sun presents. But in the dress of women, orange can only figure sparingly, as an accessory, and by way of echo or consonance; first, because it enters into the two tints of the complexion of those races who are not black, and next, because there is something slightly acid in orange colour, just as there is in the fruit from which it derives its name.

The colour with which nature has tinted the background of all her pictures, green, is the most suitable ground for other colours. It unites wonderfully well with the yellow and blue which have produced it; it heightens red, and there is no flower or ripe fruit which

it does not set off to greater advantage, either by analogy or contrast. As it tones down the brilliancy of yellow by the quiet of blue, it is both gay and modest, bright and tender. Green can only awaken amiable and gentle thoughts, remembrances gracious as those of spring, and other promises of nature : green gives repose to the mind, as it does to the sight. It is only when combined with black that green becomes symbolical of sadness. It then characterises the plants which grow among ruins, like ivy and those which are used to ornament the tomb.

But between blue and red a colour has a place which possesses a striking signification of concentration, of inflated wealth, of melancholy—I mean violet. It contains the red of life, but red encroached on by blue, and darkened. In the rites of the Christian Church, violet is the colour adopted in times of fasting, and if the *soutane* of our Bishops be distinguished by this colour, it is because their violet is more charged with crimson than that of the rainbow ; it inclines to purple, and so seems to conceal under an ashy blue the pride and passion of red. In its real colour, as the solar spectrum presents it to us, violet is a hue which has been brilliant and rich, but is so no longer. The blue of the periwinkle, the flower that thrilled the saddened heart of Rousseau, sometimes approaches violet, and it is by an infallible verdict of the imagination that popular language calls the dark purple scabious “ the widow s flower.”

It is true then that colours have in themselves not only an optical character, but in some sort a moral one, by reason of their close union with feeling ; setting aside religious feeling or those national preferences which

different peoples have given to them, as, for example, the preference of the Arabs and Turks for green, because it was the favourite colour of Mahomet. All is not relative, all is not arbitrary and variable, even in what appears to us more variable and more arbitrary than anything in the world—colour; but in dress and ornament a colour has its proper expression only when it is isolated, or the dominant colour, that is to say, when the colours which accompany it are employed to add to its eloquence, and contribute to its triumph.

THE HARMONY OF COLOURS IN DRESS.

V.

NATURE HAVING SUITED THE COLOUR OF THE COMPLEXION TO THAT OF THE EYES AND THE HAIR, WE MAY DEDUCE FROM THIS SOME GENERAL LAWS FOR THE HARMONY OF COLOURS IN DRESS.

Before reading what treats of the adaptation of colours to the ornament of the human person, it is important that the reader should remember or refer to what we have set forth in the *Grammar of the Arts of Design* concerning the law of complementary colours, black and white, optical blending, and the vibration of colours, and the changes that the different lights which illumine them cause them to undergo.

We have just spoken of the secret relations of colour to feeling. It is of its optical value, of the sensations that it conveys, and of its relative suitableness in personal ornament that we have now to speak.

And let me premise that this chapter is exclusively addressed to women, for in the great show of life, all colour in the present day is on their side. Amongst

primitive nations who are more natural, younger, and more under the sway of feeling, the man is almost as fond of colour as the woman. The savage, finding himself doubtless too much of one colour, seeks to embellish himself by tattooing; the cacique makes himself a head-dress with feathers of brilliant tints; the Moor, the Negro, the Arab, and the Indian deck themselves with staring hues. But wherever civilization becomes intricate, and developes, man abandons colour to woman; he himself becomes colourless and sombre, and in the present day throughout Europe he is dressed in black. Now-a-days scarcely anybody but soldiers preserve in their dress the variety and liveliness of colour, and while nations proclaim their brotherhood by the similarity of their civil garb, soldiers and their officers are still compelled to avow, by their different coloured uniforms, their original purpose, as shown in their style of dress, of slaying their fellow creatures. But women will never renounce the means of pleasing which colour gives them, they will never consent to lay down such a weapon.

Although the shades of hair and skin are extremely varied, we may reduce these shades to certain principal varieties, and say that the hair of women is black, fair, red, chestnut or ash-coloured. To these colours of hair correspond ordinarily certain varieties of complexion. It is rare that black hair goes with a white skin, unless the hair itself is softened down by the same cause that has whitened the skin, as we may remark in the English and Irish, whose freshness is preserved by the dampness and fogs of their island, and in the women of Antwerp, in whom the crossing of the Spanish and Flemish races has

produced the mixture of a clear complexion with the hair of the South. Both one and the other have hair and eyes of a brilliant but not dense black, which does not resemble the hair of the Italians or Spaniards. The real brunette has a dull and warm complexion, ranging from yellow to olive, and the pupil of the eye, like a carbuncle, stands out on a brilliantly white membrane. Nature is always in harmony with herself. The blonde beauty—she is in life what Rubens has represented her in his pictures, her flesh rosy, delicate and transparent, inclines to fairness. At the Hôtel Rambouillet, fair women were called *lionnes*. Chestnut hair matches wonderfully with the colour of the complexion most common in Europe; its dulled and faint red is in perfect harmony with that yellow mingled with half tones of blue grey and rose-colour, which is the usual tint of the skin. Red and sandy hair agree with a white skin and a dazzling complexion, and the eyes of ruddy-complexioned people are of a colour bordering on chestnut.

If fair hair be ash-coloured, as if it were covered with a slight layer of dust, that fine powder appears also to be sprinkled over the flesh, and to soften the eyes and subdue the brilliancy of the skin. So each temperament has its own harmony ready to hand, or at least ready prepared, and nothing remains for the artist but to render this harmony softer or more lively, to bring out that which is undecided, to set off what is insipid, to temper what is harsh, to bring into relief what may please, by subduing what would fail to give pleasure.

These varieties of complexion and hair require no

doubt varieties of colour; nevertheless there are some colours which go well with all physiognomies, such as black, light grey, and pearl grey, which, correctly speaking, are non-colours, and old oak, deep havane, and mushroom brown, because they are warm in the shade, and cold in the light.

I say black, but what black? To set off to advantage the freshness of a blonde, or the fairness of a red-haired woman, it is a soft and deep black that is wanted, the black of velvet. For a brunette, black would be frightfully melancholy, in fact it would be mourning, if it were dull and unenlivened by something glossy, such as Lyons satin, or silk, or even by *faille*, or softened like the black of velvet by rich reflexions. Ovid, in his *Art of Love*, says, "Black suits the fair: it became Briseis, she was dressed in black when she was carried off. White suits the dark: it added to thy charms, Andromeda, when, clothed in white, thou didst traverse the Isle of Seriphos." The poet is right: if black gives fairness to a brunette by contrast, white produces the same effect by throwing out a light which irradiates all that comes within its range. Light grey, which is only a softened white, produces a similar effect, provided it has a lustrous surface, and throws out reflections.

According to general opinion, which we must take into consideration, even in our country (France), where scarcely any feeling for colour exists, yellow and red suit brunettes, and blue suits blondes. Ordinarily speaking this is true, but it is subject to numerous exceptions in practice, for there are many tints in the complexions both of brunettes and blondes, and it is precisely the art that

now occupies our attention, which deals with delicate admixtures and shades of colour.

Knowing the law of the simultaneous contrast and optical blending of colours, the effect of white and black in a show of colours, the property that red possesses of surrounding itself with a halo of green, yellow with a halo of violet, and blue with a halo of orange, and vice versâ, that is to say, the property which each colour possesses of projecting its complementary colour on the surrounding space—being cognizant of these laws, and knowing what light will illuminate his work, whether sun or gas, morning or evening, a south or a north light, the artist may at his pleasure strengthen or soften, bring into prominence or subdue the natural colouring of the person he wishes to adorn, by the introduction of foreign colours into his decoration.

It is for him to judge under what circumstances he shall use this or that artifice. Would he be wise to waste his pains in hiding a fault that nothing can hide? Should he try, for example, to soften down the harshness of a swarthy complexion? No, that which cannot be concealed it is best frankly to acknowledge. In such a case then he will employ for a brunette brilliant yellows and splendid reds. A jonquil-coloured ribbon, a scarlet camellia in the black tresses, a poppy-coloured bodice, partially softened by Chantilly lace, will give a dashing character to the figure so decorated, and instead of diminishing its effect, will add to it new force. Amongst the soft beauties of the North, the sallow-complexioned Germans, the English with their dazzling and satin-like skin, the French whose complexion is generally undecided

in colour, whose hair is between the two extremes, and whose grace is all one of delicate shades—it is always a fine offence of colour, the appearance of one of those exotic and harsh beauties, or of an Andalusian with an Arab skin, a piercing eye, and stubborn hair.

In connexion with this subject, I remember that one of our most learned colourists, Eugène Delacroix, was visited, when at the point of death, by a woman, an artist, who was much attached to him, and who came to give him a last clasp of the hand. Just as she was entering the room, Delacroix, by an involuntary and instinctive movement, seized a red China scarf, and wound it hastily round his neck, as a foil to the livid, almost corpse-like pallor of his face, the colour of which, even in health, was almost that of a gipsy. The artist had survived the man.

But if we have to deal with a delicate brunette with slightly jaded features, or a brunette whose skin is comparatively fair, and eyes of a velvety black, we must no longer make use of striking and decided colours. Here, on the contrary, soft colours should be employed, especially pale blue, because that is the shade which approaches nearest to white without having its rawness. We shall thus succeed in giving fairness to the one, and we shall subdue in the other her slight pallor, and the evanescent change in her features, by associating with them the faintest possible colour.

It is the same with blondes. I mean that the common theory must often give way in this sense, that we must treat gracefulness sometimes by contrasts, and sometimes by similars. No doubt, as a general rule, the softness of fair women, which may become insipidity, calls for

certain contrasts and enhancements. If the hair of a blonde be golden or red, it ought without doubt to be accompanied by its complementary colour : a dark violet velvet bonnet, a tuft of violets in the hair, a deep lilac dress will go with it marvellously well. There is another colour which suits all shades of red hair—green of a medium intensity. If the complexion of the blonde be delicate and fresh, an orange, Turkey (*caroubier*), or ruby red will set off the freshness and delicacy, partly by similarity, partly by contrast. Red, then, is not exclusively the rouge of brunettes (“*le fard des brunes*”), to use the common expression ; it plays a part also in the dress of fair beauties. We may say the same of yellow, which we have seen look bewitching on some blondes. But in this case the yellow ought to match in hue the lightest shade of the hair, and it must be heightened by a colour that contrasts well with it.

Let us now try to find out what colours will match chestnut or ash-coloured hair, and the complexions that correspond with them. Women who are placed, so to speak, in the half shades of colour, may wear either what suits brunettes or blondes, provided the tones of their dress and ornaments be subdued in proportion to the degree of warmth in their complexion. Pure yellow or deep red would ill suit chestnut hair, even if dark ; but half tints, such as pale yellow, maize, deep yellow, turquoise blue, and hazy blue, would harmonise well with the neutral character of these natural colours. Light chestnut admits of the colours suitable to fair hair, but with a little less decidedness in the tint. As to those who have ash-coloured hair, and skin in keeping with it,

eyes blue as the sea or sea green, their delicate and extreme softness calls for half-warm tints, with suggestions of neutral grey or slashings of pale blue. Black velvet gives them fairness without detracting from the distinction and delicacy which are the characteristics of their complexion, and pearls form in their ornaments a happy consonance, provided their cold colour is relieved by one that is decided, tastefully used and concentrated within a small space, such as a polished but uncut garnet, a ruby, or a trinket of gold.

But this chapter on colours is not yet exhausted. We shall have to return to the subject by-and-by.

HAIR-DRESSING.

VI.

OF ALL THE ARTS WHICH ARE THE SUBJECT OF THIS WORK, THAT OF HAIR-DRESSING IS AMONG THOSE WHICH REQUIRE MOST SKILL AND TASTE.

The art of the hairdresser is one that requires much taste and refinement, and M. Lefebvre was right when he said in a speech he delivered in Paris, in 1778: "Hair-dressing is an art. . . . To give becoming forms to those long filaments which Nature seems to have intended for a veil rather than an ornament; to bestow on those forms a consistency of which the material composing them does not appear susceptible; to give to luxuriance a regularity which may banish disorder, and to supplement scantiness with an abundance which may deceive the most searching glance; to combine the accessories with the groundwork which they are to soften down or relieve; to give stay to a delicate face by airy

tresses, and to match a majestic one with wavy tufts; to soften the harshness of features or eyes by a contrast, and sometimes by a well considered harmony; to work all these wonders with no other means than a comb and some powders of different colours—all this is beyond doubt the essential characteristic of an art.

“The hairdresser, by the look of a face, must divine at a glance the sort of ornament that will suit it. A woman, while appearing to have her hair dressed like other women, must yet have it specially adapted to her own style of face; consequently, in each toilette, the artist repeats the most difficult of Nature’s wonders, that of being in his productions always alike, yet always different.”

All this is true, and Diderot himself, be it said with respect, could not have expressed it better. The hair is of so much importance to the face, that the gracefulness of a woman’s head, and the likeness of a man’s portrait, depend in a great measure upon its arrangement. Let us begin with man, whose mode of dressing the hair is by far the most simple.

VII.

THE STYLE OF DRESSING A MAN’S HAIR SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED AS AN ELEMENT OF BEAUTY, BUT AS A MARK OF CHARACTER.

Although, historically, the arrangement of man’s hair may have given rise to different interpretations, and nations may have attached different meanings to it, we may determine by our feelings the different shades of character indicated by the manner of cutting and wearing the hair by men.

Amongst our barbarous ancestors, long hair was a mark of honour, a token of freedom, and so Julius Cæsar understood it when he cropped the hair of the vanquished Gauls, as though to inflict upon them the ignominious stigma of the Roman scissors. In fact, there is something in hair allowed to grow freely and to float in the



BRUTUS, AFTER THE ANTIQUE.

wind that suggests the simplicity and independence of primitive peoples, and gives them a resemblance to horses with flowing mane and tail. But voluntary cutting of the hair is in no sense humiliating, and it is undeniable that it imparts an air of austerity, neatness, and adherence to rules, and, being the reverse of what is customary among women, it has on that account alone a masculine character. How could we imagine Brutus

other than with short and thick hair, such as he is represented in the antique? The shaven head heightens the expression of formal zeal in the aspect of the Quaker, and of daring in the appearance of our Zouaves; it marks also the boldness of the corsair, who is determined neither to be captured or rescued by his hair.

Besides, short hair suits equally well a beard or a shaven chin. When Francis I., wishing to hide a scar, or perhaps to correct the excessive breadth of his face, allowed his beard to grow, he felt the necessity of cutting his hair short, and by covering it with a black velvet cap ornamented with a feather, he succeeded in giving to the head a certain grace, at least in the profile, as Titian has painted him. It is then more becoming to wear the hair short with a beard, so as to give prominence to the upper part of the head, to the marking of the eyes and eyebrows, to the development of the forehead, and also to show the shape of the skull, if it is not unsightly or out of proportion. In the reign of Henry IV., when every variety of beard was introduced, for it was cut square, round, fan-shaped, swallow-tailed, and in the shape of an artichoke leaf, the beard was worn with hair proportionately short.

For an analogous reason, long hair demands the disappearance of the beard. Only a venerable old man, such as Leonardo da Vinci was when he visited France, could wear both long hair and a long beard. In the time of Louis XIII., those courtiers who were old or shaved were obliged to assume a wig, or according to the word then in vogue, a *coin*. When Louis XIV. exhibited himself in all his majesty, no one would wear his own hair,

“cheveux de son cru,” as Molière says. Besides, it was quite natural that the King should lay his edict on fashion, when he claimed to impose it upon the conscience. At that time were seen displayed on “huge Rhinegraves” brown and even blonde wigs, then in high favour. They were ill suited no doubt to the fresh charm of youth, but we must admit that they lent a certain dignity to sedate persons of mature age, just as in our day they still give an imposing air to the Speaker of the House of Commons and the judges in England.

The magistrates of the ancient parliaments, the Ministers of State, the Provost of the Merchants, the sheriffs and the bailiffs, presented a different appearance in their hammer wigs (“perruques à marteaux”) to the counsellors, judges, and functionaries of our own day whom we see in court, with their hair more or less cared for, more or less scanty, sometimes awkwardly standing up, sometimes lying flat on the temples like sabre-blades, sometimes gathered in the shape of a dagger, sometimes rough, or in ludicrous disorder. Whoever has to take part in a public ceremony, or to fulfil some important public function, would look more dignified by wearing an official head-dress, just as a cap is worn by counsellors, or a hat *à la française*, rather than give himself up to the mercy of the brush and comb, or trust to a hap-hazard arrangement of the hair, which, without his knowing it, may perhaps turn him into a laughing-stock.

In theatres where Æschylus and Sophocles, Plautus and Terence were played, the actor wore a tragic or comic mask, accompanied by false hair in keeping with it, so that the expression intended by the poet

might not be changed by the accidents of individual faces, and the permanent character of the personage be maintained.



SARGON, KING OF ASSYRIA.

In Egyptian sculpture, as in Greek statuary, the gods and heroes have their front hair divided into very fine locks, rolled in a spiral, and their back hair slightly

waved and curled with the tongs. This regularity imparts a solemn, priestly, and sacred character to their faces. The same may be said of those majestic beards of the Assyrian kings, of which there are so many examples in the Louvre and the British Museum. But without going so far back, in modern times the manner of wearing the hair was sufficient to distinguish the parties into which whole nations were divided by politics or religion, as, for example, the Roundheads and Cavaliers in the time of Cromwell, and later the rigid and the lax Quakers.

We must repeat it : the hair and the beard give expression, much more than we think, to a man's face. So the painter and the sculptor ought to take the greatest pains to copy with fidelity the style of the hair, to catch its wave, its form, and its expression. Ingres was always most attentive to this. David d'Angers excelled in it. In that series of 400 medallions which is one of the marvels of French sculpture, he copied or devised as many styles of hair as he had heads to model. He showed himself to be a coiffeur of genius. Never in the hands of any artist was the turn given to the hair so powerful a means of imparting double force to the expression.

And in fact what a difference there is between a head dressed with feeling, and the same head when the hair is left to chance or ill arranged ! No doubt the natural arrangement may be so admirable that there is no necessity for any alteration. It is thus that disordered hair may characterise the incessant absorption of a philosopher, always buried in problems, like Ampère—

let us leave him with his hair all in confusion. Neither let us meddle with the stubborn hair which indicates the intractable pride of an Ingres, nor those unkempt locks which denote the rude condition of a Danubian peasant, or the assumed frankness of a courtier in thick shoes. Speaking one day to David d'Angers of the wonderful talent he showed in the hair of his models,



he took hastily from a drawer a medallion of Kleber, and said, as he showed it us, "Look, his hair throws out rays like the sun's disc."

Every day it happens to us to fail to recognise our friends when they have cut their hair in some unusual manner, when they have shaved or allowed their beard to grow contrary to their ordinary practice. This proves what effect these natural ornaments have on a man's appearance, and how they fix themselves in the memory.

A particular face shows determination merely by the turn of the moustache ; but the moustache is robbed of all its expression unless it be worn by itself. Accompanied by the other parts of the beard, it loses its originality, it ceases to be a marked characteristic of will or temper. However slightly turned up, as it was in Callot's time, the moustache has an air of haughtiness which was so much felt, that it became, under Louis XIV., the privilege of the *corps d'élite* in the royal army ; and in the reign of the Bourbons, after their restoration, when it was desired to revive among the French troops the recollection of their ancient aristocratic constitution, only the officers were allowed to wear the moustache.

The variations which this appendage throws into the expression of the face are numerous. Molière, following the King's example, cultivated on his upper lip a thin thread of moustache, which showed the entire outline of his amiable and sensitive mouth, and it only wanted a few cuts of the scissors and razor to give an external form to the refinement of his genius, to that raillery without bitterness, to that extreme kindness, which characterised him. In our own day, Eugène Delacroix trimmed his moustache à la Molière, and upon his impassioned and worn countenance it resembled the life-like stroke of a pencil, which repeated the expression of his eyes, small and contracted, piercing and black.

When it grows naturally, the moustache is always a sign of a manly temperament. It never, or at any rate seldom, happens that it is bristling, *hirsuta*, in gentle and thoughtful characters, and it is rarely rounded, turned under, or softly curled in men of rough natures

born for contradiction and conflict. To draw it to a fine point, as was done under the Empire, whether from a spirit of mere imitation, or courtier-like flattery, is to give the face of the wearer a factitious and evanescent expression, since the points cannot be kept stiff without the use of a cosmetic, easily detected and soon melted.

How many other alterations the scissors may produce in a man's head! If the face be broadly developed, it may be lengthened by an imperial, which may be grown long enough to come below the chin. If it is too narrow, it is easy to reduce its length by spreading out the whiskers with the comb. The care that we bestow on our person is a species of politeness towards others; thus it is that many persons shave some part of their beard, in order to unite freedom of toilette with an appearance of cleanliness and trimness. Some there are who, by shaving the chin, and allowing a point of hair to grow towards the corners of the mouth, indicate a studied intention, and sometimes give to their features a meaning which they would otherwise not have had.

Under the Restoration, it was the fashion among the ultra-royalists to trim their whiskers *à la Dambray*, that is to say, to shave them like the Chancellor Dambray, as high as the orifice of the ear, and to make them grow in a curved line on the cheeks. This kind of lower eyebrow gave relief to particular faces, and lent them piquancy. We know that Berryer, the famous orator, preserved all his life an old-fashioned style, not only because it was a political archaism, but because it gave refinement and distinction to his open, blotched, and

massive face, the natural character of which was one of ready affability and universal kindness.

Once more then we must not forget what expression there is in the cut of the beard, moustache, whiskers, and hair.



BERRYER.

Hair cut square on the forehead was, in the fifteenth century, among the contemporaries of Périnet Leclercq, significative of holding the opinions and fancies of the Malcontents. Falling long on the shoulders it gave mildness and expressiveness to the mien of a Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, and was in keeping with the amiable good nature of Franklin. Combed back over the head, it bespoke the enthusiasm of a poet like Schiller. Simply smoothed down on the forehead it expressed the calm concentrated enthusiasm of a fanatic like Saint-Just.

During the French Revolution the patriots wore their hair short, and abolished powder, with the single exception of the Chief of the Mountain, and he needed all his courage to venture to present himself in the Clubs with his hair neat and in order, combed and carefully



BONAPARTE, CONSUL. (BUST BY HOUDON ?)

powdered, which proved him to be “A man methodical in his life, his hatreds, and his schemes,” such as he has been described by the youngest of the historians of the Revolution.*

Under the Directory, manners having become licentious, the feeling of a reaction full of malice betrayed itself in the plaited hair brought up on the head by the comb, and by the “dog’s ears,” which seemed to be a sarcasm

* *Histoire de la Révolution Française*, by Louis Blanc.

aimed at the discomfited Jacobins by the "Incroyables." Even our brave hussars were condemned to wear their hair like women, with those plaits turned up under their caps, called *catogans*. But by-and-by, in the midst of this effeminate society, with its long and plaited hair, there appeared a Corsican "with straight hair," a false Brutus, whose choleric and consular head was to be crowned with the diadem formerly worn by the long-haired kings.

VIII.

THE HAT, LIKE THE DRESS IN GENERAL, OUGHT IN ITS SHAPE AND ORNAMENTS, TO ACCORD WITH THESE THREE FORCES OF NATURE AND LIFE—ATTRACTION, GROWTH, AND MOTION.

One of the cleverest architects of Germany, M. Semper, who also possesses an original, speculative and investigating mind, has conceived the idea of reducing the ornamentation of the human figure to three principles. The following is a brief statement of his views, which seem profound in their obscurity, but which will appear still more profound and beautiful if, while summing them up, we succeed in throwing light upon them.*

Man should be considered, even by the æsthetic, not at all as a kind of plane figure, as an image offered to the perception, but as a solid body, in which three forces act, corresponding to the three dimensions of space :

* M. Semper's views were developed by him in a course of lectures delivered at the Polytechnic Institute at Zurich. These views would have been unintelligible to us if they had not been translated by a man of remarkable intelligence, M. Challemeil-Lacour, whose translation was published in 1865 by the *Revue des Cours littéraires*.

first, the force of attraction, otherwise called weight, which acts vertically, from top to bottom, and which keeps man on the ground; secondly, the vegetative force, independent of his will, and by means of which the growth of his organism operates from below in an upward direction; and thirdly, the force of voluntary activity, which gives the body an impetus towards a given point, towards an imposed or voluntary end.

The two first forces, weight and growth, are at variance, and it is this struggle which modifies the human form, determines its character, and defines its grace. But, by virtue of the law of inertia, these same heavy masses, which struggle with the vegetative force, also offer a resistance to voluntary activity, and are opposed to freedom of movement, as weight opposes the force of growth. Then comes a superior unity, the cardinal point of the being, thought, which, harmonising these conflicting forces, has the power of giving them expression, and showing forth their beauty.

The first condition of an active and permanent existence is that, with respect to these three forces, attraction, growth, and motion, the masses which compose the system should be balanced. If man only possessed the vegetative force, like a tree, he would develop in height; and the masses would twist themselves spirally round the trunk, so as to obey the laws of equilibrium. If the axis of growth corresponded in man, as in a fish, for example, with the axis of motion, it would require an exact balance of the masses round this axis of direction, to prevent involuntary deviation from the motion proper to the creature. Now man participates in both systems

at once. He is developed vertically like a tree, and he moves horizontally like a fish. The result is that he is independent of the law of rigorous equilibrium in a downward, just as he is in a backward direction. It is only from right to left, or from left to right, that symmetry is apparent, which is an absolute condition of statics, an inevitable submission to the laws of equilibrium. This axis of symmetry, which is horizontal, cuts at a right angle the axis of direction, which is also horizontal, and the axis of growth, which is vertical.

Here then we have the three forces, or, if you please, the three axes which correspond in the human frame to the three dimensions of space, and to these three forces are united three kinds of ornament, which the author calls *pendentive*, *annular*, and (for want of a better term) ornaments of direction. That beauty may be apparent in man it is necessary that these different centres of action should be reflected in his external form, and should there be represented in a manner perceptible to the eye.

The pendentives answer to weight. They make the stability of the body stand out. They should be essentially symmetrical. We could not imagine, for instance, a single ear-ring or two drops of unequal length and weight. The æsthetic effect of this ornament is increased by the moral reaction it exercises on the person wearing it: it obliges her to a certain moderation in her movements, to a certain dignity in her attitudes. A woman, whose ear-rings were constantly in the air, would thereby show an extreme restlessness and fickleness of disposition. The stiff vertical curls (of which we have

already spoken) of the hair and beard of the Pharaohs, and of the kings of Nineveh, belong to this class of symmetrical ornaments, as well as the draperies of the Greek caryatides, and the stiff folds of archaic figures, with their pendent tresses.

The annular or peripheral ornament has especial relation to individual proportions: it indicates the centre round which it is placed, and if its principal subject is the human head, it is because the head is the symbol of the entire man. The leafy crowns regularly arranged according to a certain form, the circles of gold, which were in Greece the emblem of exalted power, the Assyrian mitre, the feather head-dresses of the Mexican caciques, all come under this class of ornament. Next comes the necklace, which marks the transition from the head to the shoulders, and the belt which encircles the union of the torso with the lower part of the body; and then bracelets and rings, which display the delicate proportions of the extremities.

With freedom of movement and spontaneity is connected an ornament whose aim is to mark and throw these into relief. It differs from the other two, inasmuch as it is neither symmetrical nor rhythmical. It depends on the contrast between front and back, and should be arranged so as to be seen in profile. But this ornament is of two kinds: it is either fixed or floating; fixed, like the royal viper, the *uræus* which invariably decorates the brow of the deified kings of Egypt, or floating, like the mane which adorned the helmet of the Etruscans and the Greeks. In the middle ages the knight wore a waving plume on the crest of his helmet; and in our

day, regiments of soldiers, like the horse guards of England, and the lancers of France,

Et les dragons mêlant, sur leur casque gépide,
Le poil taché du tigre au crin noir des coursiers, V. H.

wear upon their caps or helmets floating appendages. Ribbons also, feathers and tufts, are among the inex-



HEAD-DRESS, SHOWING THE URÆUS, OF THE ANCIENT KINGS OF EGYPT.

haustible means of emphasising the direction of the body. The lightness of the materials, rendering these ornaments moveable, makes them express not the accidental or insignificant changes of position of the individual, but the general direction of his movements.

Such are, substantially the ideas of M. Semper touching the three grand methods of adorning the human body. These three methods, as we see, come under symmetry, radiation, and contrast. Not one of them

is at variance with the elements which we have pointed out in the Introduction to this work as essential to all ornament. We shall soon see the application of these principles to personal decoration, and first of all to the head.

It is a remarkable fact that it was a long time before man thought of decorating objects of every day and domestic use, while from the very earliest period he has carefully ornamented all his weapons, offensive or defensive, all his instruments of destruction and death. A helmet, a sword, a cuirass, however ancient, is rarely found (even if we go back to the stone age) without some embellishment, be it rude or fine, coarse or delicate. Man's first anxiety has been to inspire terror. So when he concealed his face for battle, he caused a second head to be placed on his mysteriously closed helmet, or else he depicted on it frightful faces, threatening figures, muzzles of fabulous animals, and winged griffins. But to these motionless figures the warrior added others indicative of action, such as plumes, and floating manes; and it is here that the admirable observations of M. Semper find their verification. Every plume, when it is not stiff, shows by its streaming the movement in a contrary direction of the person wearing it. The Egyptians, although they showed a marked preference for fixed forms and ornaments riveted to the object ornamented, sometimes wore feathers on the right side of the head, and they adorned the necks of their horses in the same way. But the idea of inspiring terror is still found in ages more advanced in art, and if the head of the animal has disappeared, a striking remembrance of it yet re-

mains: for example, in the ram's horns which adorn the head-dress of the Egyptian kings of the XXVth dynasty, and which figured on the medals of Alexander when he gave himself out to be the son of Jupiter Ammon. At a time when helmets were treated as symbols or objects of art the hat and cap were simply a covering for the head, without the slightest ornament. The cap of Ulysses, semi-oval in shape and without



EGYPTIAN CAP.

a brim, is the same as the sailors and fishermen of the Mediterranean wore, and which the Egyptian fellahs still wear, doubtless from their attachment to a tradition which goes as far back as the remotest ages of their history. Simple not less was the Phrygian cap, which every one knows, and which became a symbol of liberty from the custom that existed in Rome of presenting a somewhat similar cap, a *pileus*, to the slave who was to be set free.

In Greece, the hat was indicative of rural occupations,

and was scarcely ever worn except in the country, in hunting or riding. Sometimes it was flat and wide, like the Arcadian *petasus* worn by certain horsemen on the frieze of the Parthenon; sometimes it was high, with a turned-up brim like that of the Macedonians. In ancient times the hat was only looked upon as a useful article, unless it might be in war, when a character of haughti-



UNICORN CAP OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

ness, sometimes, too, of grace, was given to it, by means of a garland of flowers, as the Gauls, our savage ancestors, wore it to express their contempt of death, when they marched to battle against the Romans.

In the middle ages the hat took the most diversified forms: sometimes it was conical, sometimes semi-circular, sometimes almost cylindrical, like a mortar; but it had become a decided ornament, an instrument of distinction and luxury. "The nobility," says M. Viollet-le-Duc

(*Dictionnaire du mobilier français*), "encircled their hats with beads, chains, gold ornaments, and clasps . . . Soon they began to add diamonds and feathers, and the hats were made not only of felt, but of fur, silk, curly woollen stuff, velvet, and orfrays (that is to say stuff woven with gold) . . ." Above all it is to be noticed that in the middle ages the hat began to take a direction: it ceases to be merely round, it has a direction, whether it terminates in a point in front, like the unicorn cap, so becoming to youth, or whether one side be raised higher than the other, so as to make the hat lean elegantly on one side, while the ostrich feathers falling in an opposite direction contrast with the inclination of the hat.

The period when the hat was at its best was the reign of Louis XIII. in France, and of Charles I. in England. The hat of Henry IV. was ungraceful and almost ludicrous, and so it has been assigned to Punch, because the brim was raised in front, just where it ought to be lowered if it is to be of any use, for if the brim of the hat does not shade the brow and eyes, it is better done away with altogether. The plumed hat, worn by Rubens, Van Dyck, and Velasquez, the hat that suits their personages so well, and which covered even the scowling brow of Cromwell, has this much of elegance about it—that it has a direction, it cannot be put on indifferently on one side or the other, it has a front and a back, and can indicate the movement of the wearer, and even express it.

It is the same with dress and ornaments applied to the human figure as with the creations of architecture: they should have some dominant dimension capable of being grasped at first sight. A building square in its

ground plan and cubical in its elevation would be in the highest degree displeasing, because standing before equal surfaces and façades all alike, we should not know how to estimate its dimensions; we should not be able to distinguish the entrance from the exit, nor the principal features from the subordinate ones, and the mind like the sight would be all in doubt. For a still stronger



HAT OF CHARLES I.

reason a direction is necessary in ornaments for the human figure, especially those for the head, because it is impossible to conceive a living being, even in repose, without freedom of movement, without a possible and impending change of position, so that if one sees the figure in profile from a certain distance, we should be able to recognise from the head-dress on which side the face is, in what direction the wearer is going to walk—what is, in a word, the front façade of that moving and active edifice called Man.

Do we mean to say that the circular form can never be adapted to a head-dress? Certainly not. The crown has its beauty and suitability, especially when the ornaments upon it, directed upwards, terminate in a point almost imperceptible. The crown gives the idea of dignity, of stability. A round head-dress suits repose, and consequently domestic life; so the student wears from choice a skull cap. Besides, any radiating object leads the eye and the imagination to the centre from which the rays spring, and in this way it is not absolutely devoid of meaning. The tiara of the Popes, terminating in a point, like the mitre of the Assyrian kings, has a double meaning, because it both marks a centre and a culminating apex, an upward direction, and a point where the shape ends.

As to the ornaments that M. Semper calls *pendentive*, they have at times found a place in the hat. Notably in that which cardinals have long worn, ornamented with tufts disposed symmetrically lozenge-shape and fastened to cords.

A necessary observation to make is that if the three kinds of ornament which may be employed in man's head-dress are used in combination, it is important that one of the three should decidedly dominate over the other two, otherwise the character of the hat would be indecisive, and consequently inartistic. In this, moreover, as in everything which has shape, the disposition and rank of men are revealed at a glance. In agricultural countries, where the tiller of the soil is of necessity stationary, a simple round hat with wide brim is found sufficient; but among hunting, wandering, and warlike

peoples, like the American Indians, the head-dress has a direction : they show a tendency to disregard symmetry, and make use of feathers, which beyond all other ornaments is the ornament of direction. Like a ship which has to cleave the water, the hat and its decorations show a prow and a poop, and this is the character as it appears to us, which ought to prevail in it, if not in private life, at any rate in out-door and active life. Our tubular hats—which artists in their everyday discourse have cast such withering scorn upon—these hats without front or back, without direction, without a culminating point, and whose frightful cylindrical shape is altogether at variance with the spherical form of the head, are assuredly the last remnant of barbarism, and we must not be astonished if their use spreads in our day over the whole world, since nothing has more chance of lasting success than ugliness and absurdity.

It is very evident in the present day that in what are reckoned the most civilized countries man has ceased to make his hat an article of luxury, an object ornamented with anything besides a band and a buckle. But even supposing that this part of the dress had no other use than as a protection against the cold and the sun, still there are shapes to which taste gives a preference and art recommends, even taking into account the difference of climate. Thus, as we advance towards hot countries, it seems that the brim of the hat should increase, and this we find to be the case in the South of Europe. In Spain, the name given to the hat, *sombrero*, tells us wonderfully well that it was at first looked upon as a means of shading the face, for *sombrero* comes from

sombra which means shade, or from *sombrio* which means dark, obscure. But if we penetrate still farther into hot countries, Africa and Asia Minor, we find that the hat ceases to protect the face from the sun, while it continues to shield the head from its effects. The eyes and face remain uncovered, only the skull is protected. The Moor, the Bedouin, the Nubian, the wandering and independent Arab, making a beauty of necessity, turn their turban into an ornament, while the Turks, Egyptians, and all the subjects of the Porte, submit to wearing the official fez or tarbouche imposed upon them by an edict of the Sultan. We must go as far as Japan on the one hand and Brazil on the other to find in the hat the idea and the shape of the parasol.

If we pass from the covering of the head to the entire dress of man, from a part to the whole, we should say that his costume in general, that it may not be at variance with the laws and sentiment of art, ought not only to make known its purpose and clearly show its utility, but should also be a symbol of the forces which act on and in man. It ought to represent by its pendent and corresponding ornaments, or by the repetition of similar objects, the centre of gravity, that is to say, the axis of weight, and consequently symmetry, without which there would be no equilibrium ; it ought to reflect by its radiating forms or annular ornaments, the vegetative force, that is to say, the axis of growth ; and lastly, by its floating and waving ornaments, or by a decided direction, it ought to show freedom of action, that is to say, the axis of motion.

IX.

THE STYLE OF DRESSING THE HAIR OF WOMEN VARIES AND OUGHT TO VARY IN ITS LINES, ITS COLOURS, AND ITS CHARACTER, ACCORDING TO THE SHAPE OF THE HEAD, THE PROFILE, THE COMPLEXION AND THE AGE OF THE PERSON.

A POET who was a lover, and who was banished because of love, Ovid, did not think it beneath him to write upon the dressing of hair in elegant verse:—
“Never let your hair be in disorder : nothing pleases us so much as neatness. Your charms depend on your hands ; but there are many modes of varying the style ; above all, let each of you consult her looking-glass.

“A long face requires hair simply parted on the forehead : such was Laodamia’s style. A slight knot on the top of the head, leaving the ears displayed, best suits round faces. One woman will let her hair fall on her shoulders, like Apollo when he carries his lyre ; another will gather up her tresses, like Diana chasing the deer. One charms us by her waving ringlets, another by her bands smoothly drawn on her temples. One likes to adorn her hair with a polished shell, another to give to her tresses the undulations of the wave. We might more easily count the acorns of a bushy oak, the bees of Hybla, the animals which abound on the Alps, than the new ornaments and fashions which every day brings forth. There are many women whom hair apparently in disorder suits : it might not have been dressed since yesterday ; it has been arranged this very moment. Art should imitate chance. Such was the beautiful disorder of Iole when Hercules saw her for the first time in a

town taken by assault, and cried 'I love her!' Such was the princess forsaken on the shores of Naxos, when Bacchus bore her away in his car to the shouts of the Satyrs who cried 'Evœ!' "

The arrangement of the hair being indispensable to beauty only in woman, man, without actually handling the scissors and the curling tongs, ought to be his own hair-dresser ; and if so, we may be sure, as has already been said, that his character, careless or careful, impetuous or calm, timid or resolute, stiff or unreserved, will show itself in the way in which he usually cuts and arranges his hair. But woman needs to be adorned with profound skill, and it is not easy for her to dress her own hair. Let us see if there are not some fixed rules which should be recognised and followed to

Bâtir de ses cheveux le galant édifice.

The first thing that a woman should consider in preparing for that great work, her toilette, is the shape of her head, which she must also compare with her stature, and with her slimness or *embonpoint*. But it is the same with the human figure which is to be adorned as with a picture that has to be finished : it can only be judged of properly before a glass. Before a glass (and it must be a large one) the figure can be studied, the proportions of the body, the age, can be better understood, because the reflection renders imperfections more apparent by showing them in an unexpected manner, that is to say, by showing the right side of that which is generally only seen on the left. Being more at liberty to look at a woman from head to foot and at different distances, the

artist who dresses her hair can better see what he ought to see, and he will more easily be able, after a study which is neither inconvenient nor embarrassing, to select and adapt the style of embellishment most in accordance with the rules of his art. If the head is short—it is always short when it is not oval—the elements of taste point out a sure method of correcting that defect. By drawing back the hair in the Chinese or any other style, we give length to the head because the eye is carried in the direction of height, which may be still further increased by raising the hair to the top or on the back of the head. In the latter case it is necessary that the mass of hair should be sufficiently raised to be seen when we are looking at the face in front, and it must terminate in a curve; for if it formed a flat line, we should be flattening what we meant to heighten. When smooth bands are fashionable or worn from choice, they should be made to describe on each side a curve which will display the forehead and give narrowness to the face, or else the oval shape should be restored by encroaching a little on the cheek bones by any means which the prevailing fashion will allow.

If the head is long, anything giving squareness in front will help to shorten it. Straight roots would no longer be suitable; but the hair should be brought down on the temples, with a slight wave to make it puff out, or bands taken off horizontally, to give as much width as possible to the forehead. Applying here the principle of division, the height could easily be diminished by means of a chain or band, with a jewel in the middle (*ferronnière*); but the *ferronnière* is an awkward line which intersects

the forehead harshly, and the fashion of wearing it, if it were to return, would be condemned by good taste. A professor who has written on his art, and who in his day dressed the hair of the prettiest women in Paris, Croizat, (*Les Cent-et-un Coiffeurs*) makes the just observation that nearly all styles of dressing the hair suit faces which are a perfect oval, especially those which one would have chosen for round shaped heads. But if the head has the defect of too great depth, if it is too much developed in the parietal region above the occiput—which, by the way, is very rare in women—it would be easy to remedy this blemish by carrying above and below the too prominent part the tresses which would have formed the chignon. So surrounded and balanced, any undue protuberance would disappear and the head resume its original graceful shape.

Next to the general proportions of the head we must examine the entire profile. A projecting forehead, sunken and deep-set eyes, would not bear anything coming forward on the face, nothing covering it (because such a face wants to be lightened), nothing again too much drawn off from the face, as it would be in the antique style of wearing the hair, because the projection of the forehead would then be too strikingly displayed. A head with a receding forehead and face somewhat sheep-like requires a style in which the hair is brought forward on the head, and which by diminishing the curve of the profile, would make the features recede. In this case we may cover the top of the forehead according to the fashion of the day, either with waving curls, or with those rounded tufts which recall, but that

they were larger, the style of dressing the hair à la Titus, or with a coronet slightly lowered, or with a heart-shaped wreath, à la Marie Stuart. We need not say that hair smooth on the temples would only make more conspicuous the defect it is necessary to conceal.

But the obligation he is under to conceal or lessen the irregularities of which we have been speaking should not prevent the hairdresser from throwing some character into his handiwork, and giving it the desired style. Since the grave Boileau has allowed himself to compare the dressing of the hair to an edifice, we may also be permitted to discuss the three orders of this modish sort of architecture. Besides, it is to the purpose to remember that it is Vitruvius—the classic Vitruvius—who marks the intentional resemblance of the Ionic volutes to the curls of a woman's hair.

Great as may be the variety of styles of hairdressing adapted to the different faces of women, it is possible to reduce them all to one of these three types—severity, grace, and magnificence. And how many differences, almost insensible, may not be found in the intervals which separate these three orders of ornament! By how many delicate transitions do we not pass from the severe to the graceful, from elegance to stateliness, from richness to dignity! How many are the gradations between the two extremes of severity! What shades, to sum it all up, in grace, which is itself nothing but a shade!

The real world, like the world of painting, has its types of style, race, or character, and of *genre*; and generally they are easily distinguished by the shape of the nose, which is the most prominent and decided

feature. In examining anyone's profile, it is the shape of the nose which it is important first of all to observe. If it is straight, if it continues the line of the forehead with a very slight depression, the style of hair should be regular, quiet, symmetrical, and but little loaded with ornament, for simplicity is the commencement of severity. An arrangement borrowed from the statues of the great period of the antique, the hair worn low, developed in the direction of depth, and having as its only movement soft ripples like what we see in the hair of the Venus of Milo, the hair twisted behind and a curl or two falling from it on the nape of the neck, a plaited coronet, a string of pearls placed horizontally, anything resembling fillets, like the *tania* or ribbons of victory of the ancients, —such are the symbols of the severe style. We spoke just now of the antique statues of the great period, because there are celebrated figures, of a time later than that of Phidias, such as the Apollo Belvedere and the Venus de' Medici, whose hair, gathered into a knot on the crown of the head, partakes of the graceful style.

But, for the severe style, the face must be calm, the nose a little thick, especially at the root, and the eye large and full, for there is a sort of straight nose which, from its delicacy and sharpness, ceases to be severe, and which is often found in company, as among the Borde-laises, with roguish eyes, and a lively and *spirituelle* expression. A *coiffure de genre* suits these sharp and sly, although regular and straight noses, as well as that pretty nose which, describing a scarcely perceptible curve, is turned up a third of its length, to be cut, so to speak, in facets, and to breathe through sensitive and

nervous nostrils. We mean by *coiffure de genre* that which requires contrast rather than symmetry, that which lends itself to irregularities, that whose lines, instead of being continuous, are broken, and instead of resembling each other, are just the opposite. These definitions apply equally to graceful arrangements of the hair, although grace may also insinuate itself into the severe style, but only to a slight extent and to soften it.

But if the nose is unequally short and turned up, the hair admits of still more fanciful arrangement; it may be whimsical, surprising, even set off with a little disorder. A stray ringlet, a careless bit of ribbon, an aigrette on one side would be allowable, or a falling spray of flowers, or a single curl on the face. In fact, it rarely happens that there is not some harmony between the shape of the nose and the moral character; and a nose à la Roxelane is generally a feature which nature gives to lively and dashing women, who have an open mouth and ready speech, a bold eye and a sprightly air. After all, these remarks only apply to the *indications* of character. To dress a woman's hair according to the style of her face, one need not be a La Bruyère; but one ought to possess quick-sightedness, and, above all, the principles of a physiognomist.

To have a correct profile, a head of a typical form, the features of an Italian beauty, is by no means the same thing as to have a high-bred face. This word points more especially to heads with character about them, to those which have a look of distinction, a remarkable expression, or a grand air. Let the nose be a little arched, or projecting almost in a straight line, it is

always rather long in this sort of face; it is neither classic nor bold; it has a marked direction, an apparent design, and so the hair must not be dressed in the antique or *genre* style: a luxuriant and historic coiffure suits such heads—we mean that without being disguised or setting the reigning fashion at nought, it is better to keep to a bygone style in some characteristic details. We may recall, as cases in point, such well-known faces as those of Grignan, Sévigné, La Vallière, Fontanges, and Gabrielle, whose characteristic heads avoid the incongruities that the taste of the time would have inflicted on them. A traditional style of ornament suits them better than the impromptus of the moment, and without doubt a grave and dignified elegance is more becoming than a mere caprice.

One word more as to colours. Whatever may be the flower, the ribbon, the crape, the gauze, the material or the jewels chosen, it is important not to forget that variety is the enemy of severity. A single colour freely used by itself would be more severe than several colours. For a graceful or fantastic style a mixture of different colours may be suitable, because variety corresponds to fancy, and seems to throw into relief the lightness and changeableness of grace; but where we wish for an indication of character, unity is synonymous with dignity. Repeated with symmetry, or placed in the centre—I mean in the axis of the head-dress—one single colour is a dignified ornament, and the effect it will produce is as certain as in another way would be that of a bush of colours, or, as professors say, of a *jardinière*.

Anyway, in the choice of colours, warm or cool,

brilliant or pale, pure or medium, due regard should be had not only to the complexion and colour of the hair, but to the character and age of the person. Here we may apply the observations already made on the expression of colours.

Character! do you say—what a long word for a flower! Yes, flowers have a great deal of character, and so have feathers and ribbons, lace and gauze. It is only a slight thread which connects all this with our feelings; but that slender thread is never broken. Would you place indifferently on a haughty head or a face with irregular features, field flowers, the lily of the valley, the narcissus, and the Easter daisy? Would you deck a face breathing of the spring with sprays of the black or purple vine, or place a wild rose in hair which should be soberly dressed? You might just as well set on a brunette's head those wreaths of hop, or those mosses mixed with leaves whose decided green goes so well with fair faces. As if they were the work of a woman's hand, flowers have received from nature certain expressions dependent on their colour, form, or mien, independent of the idea we attach to them, or of the associations of memory. The dahlia, in its perfect symmetry, is a severe flower; the camellia, in its beautiful regularity, has a serene and noble air; and the hundred-leaved rose, just like the peony, a certain magnificence, especially when it is of a brilliant hue. Lilacs, primroses, rose-coloured heather, wall-flower, clematis, the wistaria, the wood hyacinth, the catch-fly, the wild tansy, the blossoms of the plane and wild cherry, all these delicate creations which florists imitate to perfection, and which can be made into long

clusters, wreaths, and sprays, belong to the graceful style, to the head-dress of youth.

A bunch of blue bells, of corn-poppies, and a *cérès* of ears of corn (as has been so well said) must recall harvest time, and it is hardly allowable that they should be worn indiscriminately at a dinner party in town or country. There are some drooping flowers whose very appearance is sentimental, others which are irregular, whimsical, and, so to speak, desultory, like the begonia, so dear to Japanese artists. Some there are whose exquisite symmetry and extreme delicacy are their chief charm, like the lingwort, sedum, sage, forget-me-not, and the elder flower. The convolvulus expands gently, the columbine droops sadly, and the daisy displays gaily its star-like corolla. Is there not an air of freedom in the attitude of many flowers and flowerets which grow straight and firm on their slender stalks? Is there not a manifest purpose of elegance in the form and bend of the fuchsia? Wild oats, which are so suitable for *coiffures de genre* and fancy, have they not an air of pretty and attractive disorder? The flowers that are most magnificent when full blown are retiring in the bud. Modesty, pride, frankness, reserve, coquetry, boldness, and independence—all these human characteristics may be attributed to flowers, and are, in fact, attributed to them by the unerring sentiment which has created the poetry of their language. It is enough to say that to the expression of their colour and form must be added that of their bearing, their mien, their easy carriage, their whole aspect, and thus we shall have in the kingdom of flowers an endless choice of decoration for the

head-dress of woman, according to her style, appearance, and age.

We often hear it said, that it is a mistake for a woman of a certain age to make herself appear younger by her dress and style of hair ; that it would be more becoming, at thirty-five for example, to dress as if you were forty, than to fall back on the style that suited you at thirty. This is going too far, as it seems to us, and reckoning on a reaction which will not, perhaps, take place in the mind of the spectator. No doubt it is a false calculation to make yourself appear too young ; but to try to appear old, that your age may be charitably allowed to you, is a calculation still more false, or, at any rate, a dangerous one. In the world, where the battles of coquetry take place, where the rivalries of grace, and the emulations of art come into play, modesty of intention is a very precarious artifice : we are generally taken at our word.

Young women always look well with their hair taken off so as to show the face. The ear, according as nature has formed it with more or less delicacy, may be entirely uncovered or partially hid ; the forehead, if high—if longer than the nose—should be concealed a little, and the face only uncovered near the temples. Long curls, such as Lawrence's figures wear falling on their cheeks, have an expression of sentimental reverie which may suit certain romantic ladies ; but, in a general way, the cheeks left bare and the hair turned back is more graceful and natural than these drooping ringlets which the most chaste and tender kiss would disarrange. Why display beautiful curls on the cheek when they look so elegant on the nape of the neck or the shoulder ? To

conceal a part of the face, is it not to make people suspect some defect, or to lead them to believe more than really exists? Women who hide under corkscrew curls their faded complexions, or the marks which the finger of time has left on their faces, make themselves look old by this very precaution. Sincerity is best.

As regards young girls, they are always charming when they display the whole of the face. Youth is such a skilful hairdresser !

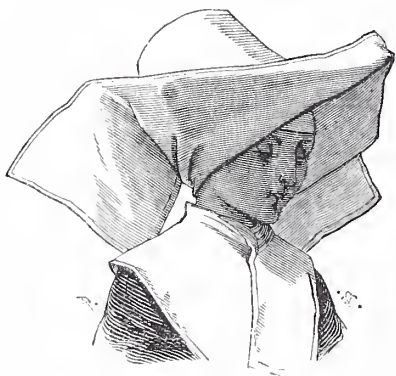
X.

FASHION IS CLOSELY CONNECTED WITH HEAD-DRESSING IN WOMEN, THAT IS TO SAY, THE ART OF ADAPTING THE BONNET TO THE HEAD, AND OF SUITING IT TO THE WHOLE OF THE DRESS.

THE art of dressing the head and the art of fashion are connected without being identical, and in spite of their close union we can readily distinguish them. The bonnet, not being indispensable, as the head can be brilliantly arranged without it, forms part of the dress. It belongs to the complete costume, and properly so, since it is the crown of all.

Like all other parts of her dress, a woman's bonnet is an indication of character, and this can only arise from its relation to sentiment. Look at that nun who is passing by, devoted to charitable works, and who bears the name of the virtue she practises: she wears on her head a large white *cornette*, which conceals the profile of her face, only leaving the organs of sight, breathing, and speech uncovered; her hair is invisible, and even its growth is hid under the bandage across her forehead. Starched and stiff, this *cornette* expresses to herself complete with-

drawal from the world. Its single fold has a purpose and determination ; no hand has touched it. Its smooth whiteness is an emblem of chastity and purity. Look, now, at a fashionable young lady of the present day, who has discovered how to wear a bonnet without its covering her head, and who, far from concealing her hair, draws it back, puffs it, crimps it, displays it, and even adds to it an artificial abundance. Are not these the two



EXTREME SEVERITY IN THE HEAD-DESS.

extremes of bonnets between which every variety of severity and coquetry may find a place ?

So true it is, that carefully to conceal the hair and as much as possible of the face is connected with a feeling of severity, that in the time of Isabella of Bavaria, towards the close of the fourteenth century, widows added to the veil and wimple, which at that time covered the forehead, cheeks, and hair, a chin-piece, called a *barbette*, which only left the mouth visible, and was looked upon as a sign of mourning. Hence the veils, wimples, and chin-pieces worn in imitation by nuns of different

orders, who by their chastity and self sacrifice are, so to speak, the voluntary and mystical widows of the world.

When devotion, true or false—for sometimes it is the fashion—is in the ascendant, the bonnet is a protection from stolen glances ; it prevents the eyes from seeing and being seen by stealth. Such was the bonnet worn in France at the time of the Restoration, when a certain



EXTREME COQUETRY IN THE HEAD-DRESS.

religious guise was considered high breeding and good taste. In proportion as austerity diminishes, the front of the bonnet diminishes likewise, and when the Quakeresses give up the tenets of their sect, they will certainly alter the uniform bonnet which is one of the outward signs of their belief. If freedom of manners were to gain the victory over sedate deportment or hypocrisy, there would be nothing left of the bonnet but the shape and the strings.

But to talk of shape, as we have but lately seen the

bonnet, is mere elegant irony. Sometimes it is flattened on the head, like an inverted saucer; sometimes it is composed of velvety leaves, mounted in a coronet or *en cêrès*; sometimes it is nothing but a simple bow of English point, or a skull-cap of straw bound with velvet, or a piece of felt turned up, or a lilliputian three-cornered hat, enlarged with all sorts of gewgaws, or a cap of silk cloth, or a little bell-shaped funnel, indented and tilted over the ear; sometimes it is only a puffing of tulle and velvet, or a pretty confusion of lace, ribbons, and flowers, so that the idea of covering the head has given place to the desire to adorn it. A bonnet is simply an excuse for a feather, a pretext for a spray of flowers, the support for an aigrette, the fastening for a plume of Russian cock's feathers. It is placed on the head, not to protect it, but that it may be seen better. Its great use is to be charming.

But the bonnet, like the dressing of the hair, has its varieties of outward aspect, which depend greatly not only on the materials employed, but on the turn given to them and the manner of wearing them. Of course the bonnet itself must be all elegance, whether it be severe or coquettish, simple or rich in style, the device of fancy, or made after a recognised pattern, like the Catalonian, Tyrolese, Watteau, and Trianon shapes. Grace is the foundation of everything; but it varies in a thousand ways.

To say something more of the materials of which the bonnet is made, what a difference there is between black and coloured velvet! How much more simple and grave the one is than the other! The non-colour is to

the innumerable shades created by nature or art what unity is to variety. But if velvet gives richness and quietness to black which it deepens, or to the tints which colour it, what an air of lightness and delicacy is there on the contrary in a lace bonnet, a knot of blonde ; for we see, daily, bonnets composed of these cloudy materials which afford neither protection nor covering, and whose only purpose is to be arranged prettily, to be skilfully manipulated, to be elegantly useless.

It is the same with feathers : one can scarcely see in them the most remote allusion to a sun-shade. Their sole use is to ornament. When they are stiff, like pheasants' and cocks' feathers, they have a determined and gallant expression. Pliant and drooping they have a sort of warlike grace, which recalls the crested plumes of ancient chivalry, and for that very reason forms a pretty contrast between the woman's delicacy and the military style of her costume. A single feather is elegant and haughty, especially when it falls on the back of the head, and why ? Because, by indicating the action of the air in a contrary direction to that in which the wearer of the feather is walking, it reveals an impulsive will, and a life-like movement.

Several feathers curled, brought together in tufts, or symmetrically arranged as a coronet, produce the impression of richness and style. As to the West Indian birds which display their wings as it were in a nest of black feathers on iridescent leaves, like the humming birds of Brazil, one cannot fail to see in them a magnificence which suits but few faces, and only those of a marked character. Marabout feathers, so wavy and

filmy, are only suitable for women of mature age, because they add a richness to the head-dress which youth does not stand in need of, but which makes up for faded beauty. So also, on account of the splendid luxuriance of their symmetrical colouring, peacocks' feathers are better placed in the centre of the head-dress than at the side.

Let there be no mistake: there are many things in the bonnet which do not depend upon fashion, which are released from its absolute yet limited control. All the ukases of this capricious and fantastic sovereign will not prevent a bonnet fastened with strings from being more modest, more of a covering—I was going to say more seemly—than a little cap perched on one side, or a plate upside down, like the Nice bonnet, fastened to the back of the hair by a ribbon nearly horizontal, and whose ends float behind. It is clear that with the one bonnet we connect the idea of reserve, with the other the idea of liberty. The former covers the space between the cheeks and the hollow under the ear, which space always gives a voluptuous expression when it is slightly depressed; the latter leaving uncovered the flexibility and grace of all the parts about the neck, allows the light to fall tenderly upon them and the imagination to caress them. The bonnet strings then are not without their bearing on the style of the bonnet. Whether they be of blonde or crape, ribbon of silk or velvet, tulle or gauze, they express an intention of covering a part which is exposed and of fastening the bonnet, thereby giving it an appearance of modesty. An appearance, we say, for it hardly amounts to more than this in the modes, so finely

shaded, in which women obey the fleeting decrees of fashion. So those women who leave exposed the cheeks, the ear, the neck, and even down to the spring of the shoulders, seem to make up for the display of the flesh tints by the veil which covers all their charms, and is carelessly pinned to the back hair. . . But what are we saying? This transparent veil, whose filmy material is so prettily called *tulle illusion*, is perhaps only a means of attracting attention, and of making more conspicuous what there is an appearance of wishing to conceal.

We may remark the same pretence in the chaplet which encircles the face, or in the scarf fastened on the breast with a rose or a jewel. And what a difference there is between a scarf carefully gathered under the chin, and one which only falls on the neck after having been carelessly tied behind and at the side.

But we must be clearly understood. The suitableness of a bonnet may vary. A bonnet which would appear smart in town may be elegant and suitable for the country or for the seaside, provided the rest of the dress is in keeping. At such times a little liberty is allowable. Let us add that, generally speaking, for dress to be attractive, there must be a contrast, appealing either to sight or sentiment, to heighten it. For example, nothing suits a pretty woman better, especially if she has a lively manner, than to have something rather masculine or military in her head-dress. A small Hoche or Kleber hat placed on hair turned back gives an air of bravado, which contrasts with the delicacy of her sex. When a woman is devoted to some manly pursuit, like riding or hunting, or when she sets out with tourists on a moun-

tain expedition, it is always very becoming to her to bring the rough or manly style of her dress into contrast with the delicacy of her hands, the smallness of her feet, and her lithe and fragile figure.

A man's hat has long been looked upon as classic in the costume of a woman on horseback, whose only way of asserting her sex is by wearing a veil, under pretence



HEAD-DRESS CALLED HENNIN.

of protecting her eyes from the dust and sun. How otherwise than by a little masculine felt hat with a short feather, or a little turned-up cap, could the dress be made complete, which recalls the sedition of the Fronde, or a suit consisting of a frock coat with buttons, a vest of the French Guard, a turned-down collar, a collegian's cravat, and a Zouave's trousers and gaiters? Who does not feel that a martial air gives piquancy to the grace of

a fragile creature, because it becomes a pleasant joke, a piece of irony!

Women often wear high bonnets, and there is no objection to this, provided the bonnet be perfectly distinct from the head, and the excessive length or size be quite separate from the mass of the head itself. In the fifteenth century, when French ladies wore those huge pointed head-dresses called *hennin*, its mere inclination,



THE HORIZONTAL STYLE OF HEAD-DRESS.

without saying anything of its shape, detached it completely from the rest of the body, the natural proportions of which were not altered by it, because the *hennin* was simply an ornament, evidently intended as a decoration for the head, and easily separated from it in imagination. In the present day, on the contrary, women make with their own or their false hair, a structure all of a piece, so clumsy, so voluminous, that, in spite of the most elementary laws of human proportion, the head becomes

the fifth and sometimes the fourth part of their whole person!

We have spoken of what was meant in the human head by a vertical, horizontal, or oblique direction (*Grammaire des Arts du Dessin*). These inexorable rules apply also to the head-dress. Placed horizontally, it gives an idea of order and calmness. Coming more or less over the forehead, and only allowing the eyes to be



THE OBLIQUE STYLE OF HEAD-DRESS.

seen, as though to increase their brilliancy, it gives an expression of independence and originality, because there is but one horizontal, while the oblique line varies according to the degree of its obliquity. It is evident that a woman's bonnet or hat has quite a different appearance when it is placed parallel to the natural lines of the face, than when it cuts these lines by being worn to right or left, before or behind, instead of following them as the frame follows the outline of the object framed.

To sum up, the same rules hold good for the head-

dress and bonnet of women as for the other parts of their dress and personal ornament of which we are going to speak. Regularity, symmetry, unity, the choice of the vertical or horizontal, are essential to the severe or serious style; while variety, alternation, contrast, the preference given to oblique lines, are indications of self-will, boldness, and caprice, or at any rate the characteristics of youth and liberty.

DRESS.

XI.

WITHOUT VIOLATING THE ABSOLUTE LAWS OF BEAUTY, MALE COSTUME OUGHT TO VARY, BOTH ACCORDING TO THE CLIMATE OF THE COUNTRY AND THE BELIEF OF THE NATION, AND ALSO ACCORDING TO THE NATURE OF A MAN'S FUNCTIONS AND HABITS OF LIFE.

It would be a false idea to try to reveal the shape of the body by means of the dress which covers it, for we do not dress to display the nude figure, but to protect it from the inclemency of the weather and to conceal it from view. Sculpture, it is true, often employs drapery so as to make the nude figure seen beneath its slight covering; but the sculptor, in doing this, thinks of nothing else but the beautiful. Marble is only an emblem; it is not chilly; marble, being chaste, feels no shame. Destined to show the beauty of the immortals, it does not express morbid and perishable flesh, but forms pure, eternal, and divine. Drapery, then, in the hands of the sculptor is only a means of enhancing the beauty of the nude figure, by contrasting with its compact and smooth modelling the ruggedness of the folds, and

with its whiteness, on which the light falls, those sunken parts which retain the shadow.

But the drapery of the living man is subject to other conditions. It is not necessary that it should cling to the limbs like a wet cloth. Better, indeed, not to reveal the shape than to simulate it as the scabbard does the sword. Dress has its own dignity and elegance, not entirely and absolutely depending on the body it covers. The outer covering may have a grace independent of the form beneath.

Since civilisation has invented and insisted upon modesty, dress, even when it was not a protection against the climate, has necessarily been employed, not to display the shape, but to conceal it. The simple and primitive nudity of the fellahs in Egypt has nothing immodest in it; while on the contrary the tights of our male and female dancers are almost indecent. Besides, convenience is hardly more consulted than decorum in these close-fitting garments, which impede the movements and prevent the blood from circulating. But for men leading an active life, or for military men, it is not unsuitable to show the curve of the leg by means of tight stockings or gaiters, in order that the wearer may appear more at ease. Generally speaking, a man with a large head, coarse features, and a brawny face, will not have a slight leg, a bony ankle, or a meagre calf; and, in such a case, there would be a happy effect of harmony, or, if you will, of consonance, in showing that the lower part of the figure corresponds to the upper. How much more ready and alert a Greek *en fustanelle*, and a Zouave with his breeches gartered below the knee, appear, than a foot

soldier whose large trousers fall over his shoes. It follows, then, that man's dress should have amplitude, or at least ease, where it envelops the trunk, and should be tight-fitting only at the extremities.

There is one part of a man's dress whose use is indicated by nature itself—I mean the belt. Races remarkable for their activity, such as the Basques, the Spaniards, the Corsicans, and generally the inhabitants of mountain countries, gird up their loins, and so are more capable of bearing long marches and fatigue. The belt is a peripheral ornament corresponding with the axis of growth, but one which, however slight and loose it may be, still assists our movements. This is so true that the Romans called the brave man ready for action *alte cinctus* (high girt), and the indolent nerveless man, the cowardly soldier, *discinctus*. “Mistrust,” said Sylla, speaking of Cæsar, “that young man with the loose girdle”—*ut male præcinctum puerum caverent*. By contracting the internal organs, the belt renders them more easy to be carried. It is to man what the girth is to a horse: it is only laid aside when at rest.

The contrast between a tight and a loose garment is not without grace, because it expresses readiness for action, with a determination to be at liberty in action. There is nothing more charming than the floating chlamys of the Athenian knights, so well imitated in France by the short cloak of the Valois, which did not reach below the belt. But the elegance of this light mantle consisted in its contrast with a tight-fitting doublet and hose.

His linen is one of the most important and delicate

parts of a man's dress; but custom requires that we should only show what is necessary to make its cleanliness evident. The display of the shirt-front has a double inconvenience, in leading us to think that its whiteness is perhaps exceptional, and at the same time in throwing a great mass of light on the chest, which attracts the attention and fatigues the eye.

Titian, in his portraits, manages the whiteness of the linen with great care. Where the costume requires it, part of the shirt-front is seen; but its whiteness is softened by a warm glaze, and by the little shadows formed by the folds of the tumbled linen. Van Dyck and Rembrandt, in their pictures, treat the frills and bands in a way not to offend the eye by their whiteness, by laying over them a slight tint of blue or yellow, and they soften them still more by means of the little black points in the lace. The plaited ruffles are equally subdued to throw out the flesh, the white of the eye, and the lights on the forehead, the nose, and the cheeks.

In everyday life, as the whiteness of the linen cannot be toned down as in painting, it becomes, when it is too much displayed on the chest, a spot of light distressing to the eye, and an ostentation which popular wit has ridiculed by creating this metaphorical expression for him who gives himself airs of importance—"he makes a show of his linen" (*il fait jabot*). There is, besides, a certain dignity, or at least reserve, in buttoning oneself up, rather than in leaving the waistcoat completely open. This is so true that language even gives us a proof of it. Thus we make use of another metaphor for a man who pushes circumspection too far: we say that he is "always

buttoned up." A similar idea is attached to the expression "high collar" (*collet monté*), the interpretation given to the appearance of a man whose head is buried in his coat.

The expression of the head depends greatly on what supports it. So the surroundings of the throat have a great deal of character about them. If a man wears his beard long, a cravat is almost useless; the collar of his shirt or some sort of border may take its place. If the beard is short, the cravat looks bad if it is higher than "Adam's apple," because by appearing above it, it would be a contradiction to the disposition which a desire to dispense with the razor supposes.

Let us speak now of coats, and we will begin with that which in cold countries is specially intended to cover the chest, and which was formerly called a doublet, after Richelet's definition, thus expressed—"A part of a man's dress which covers the back, the stomach, and the arms, and which consists of the body of the doublet, the sleeves and the collar, and of busks and skirts." Simplified, the doublet has become what we now call a waistcoat. But under whatever name it may be worn, whether it be without sleeves to put under a coat, or whether, to take the place of it, skirts be added, it is necessary that this part of the dress should not divide the bust into two equal parts, and that it should reach at least as low as the navel, in order to diminish the size of the abdominal regions, by giving more importance to the organs of respiration.

Here we touch upon a point which is influenced by national ideas and beliefs. There are nations, such as

the Chinese and the Japanese, who consider obesity as a sign of perfect happiness. They call domestic union the *embonpoint* of families; just government, the *embonpoint* of the empire; harmony among nations, the *embonpoint* of the world. Far from repressing the development of the belly, the Chinese display it with delight, to judge by their sculptured and painted representations. The people of the West, by reason of their spiritualism, attach more value to the predominance of the pectoral muscles in a broadly developed trunk, whose hips are perpendicular, and whose viscera are restrained by rigid muscles. The Greeks have given us a proof of this predilection in their statues, particularly in that of the *Ilissus*, which formed part of the western pediment of the Parthenon. Since the era of Christianity, the predominance of spirit over flesh has only strengthened the feeling of the Greek artists. It is natural, therefore, that, according to their belief, the Western nations should assign a higher rank to the organs of respiration than to those of digestion: let us not forget, besides, that the word spirit originally signified breath. This is why it is more fitting that any garment serving as a doublet or waistcoat should extend at least to the spring of the hips, so as to cover a part of the belly, while it gives breadth to the chest.

But a doublet without sleeves and skirts becomes an under garment, and it is especially the outer garb which comes within the range of æsthetic observation. Whether this be a robe, a gown, a cloak, a frock coat, or a dress coat, the first remark we have to make is, that the length of the garment ought to be in proportion to the sedateness of the wearer. The imaum and the dervish in the

East, the Coptic monk in Egypt, the rabbi and the Catholic priest in Europe, dress in a long robe or a cassock. The magistrate, on his part, following the example of the priest, puts on, in what he calls the sanctuary of justice, a dress which is lengthened and widened into a gown. See at the Comédie-Française Molière's doctors: they are dressed as they were in his time, in a short cassock or a black robe with bands. This was because they wished to impose on the public, and force themselves upon the sick, and so the empirics of that day were instinctively led to adopt a dress ecclesiastical in shape and colour, and to comport themselves in their language and garb like the priests who styled themselves the physicians of the soul. So the physical embarrassment of a long dress, and the impediment it offers to quickness of motion, answers, in a moral sense, to a feeling of gravity and decorum.

On the other hand, as soon as functions, instead of being purely spiritual, became active, as in civil, industrial, or military life, the dress was shortened, the legs ceased to be clothed with an embarrassing covering, the robe became a frock coat, the frock coat a dress coat, the dress coat a vest, and the paletot itself is only, like the sailor's overdress, a shortened cloak, without weight or inconvenience, or any other folds than those intended by the tailor. It was in short cloaks that the "petits abbés" of the Regency pursued ladies with their galanteries and their weak verses. The Duke of Wellington, who was well made, and who wished it to be known, cut short the skirts of his blue uniform coat, in order to appear better proportioned and more active. In

battle, and notably at Waterloo, to be more easily recognised by the whole army, he wore a small white cloak, which did not come below the saddle of his horse, and which in no way impeded his movements. From all this one sees that a long garment is expressive as connected with the idea of a peaceful, grave, and abstracted life. "Quant aux vestements," says Montaigne, "qui les vouldra ramener à leur vraye fin, qui est le service et commodité du corps, d'où despend leur grâce et bienséance originelle. . . ." If it were true that the gracefulness of a garment ought only to be an evidence of its usefulness, the æsthetics of costume would be reduced to an inquiry *de commodo et incommodo*; but it is not entirely true: suitability—I mean the true relation of the object to the purpose for which it is intended—is not the sole element of beauty; it is not more so in the draped than in the nude figure.

Let us glance, for example, at the coat called a dress coat (*frac*)—Diderot wrote it *fraque*—skirts are necessary pendentives for two reasons; first, because placed as they now are they form a suitable transition between the body and the legs; and secondly, because this ornament is almost the only one which in male costume represents the centre of gravity. In the time of the Directory, the *Incroyables* had two watch pockets in their trousers, and they wore two watches, the chains and seals of which they left hanging to right and left. This was to conform to symmetry, which is absolutely essential in all pendentive ornaments, since we have agreed to apply this word to costume. A single watch chain falling on one side would be as distressing as a

single earring. So we have given up this ornament, and the watch is placed in a pocket of the waistcoat, leaving the chain to appear as a fastening, and not as a pendant.

The dress coat or *frac* is at present what the *justaucorps* was before the Revolution. The pockets that we have contrived under the skirts behind, were then worn in front, and of these pockets, by means of braid, flaps, and worked button holes, a kind of ornament was made.

But the *justaucorps*, coming down to the knees almost like the frock coat of our day, hid all signs of wear that might appear on the under garment, that is to say on the breeches: so it was thought needful to suppress the skirts in front, keeping only the tails behind, and this was done with the idea that the less any part of the dress was concealed, the more was it imperative to keep it clean; and as consequently a frock coat is less ceremonious than a dress coat, it amounts to this, that it shows more politeness to appear in a dress than in a frock coat. And is it not the same feeling a little exaggerated, which has led men of fashion to wear the waistcoat very much open, in order to display the greatest possible expanse of shirt front on the chest at a dinner-party or a ball?

The ornaments which Semper calls "ornaments of direction" are rarely found in the dress of the civilian. But we find some examples when we go back to old fashions, particularly to the shoulder-knots, which prevailed in England in the time of Queen Anne, after having been in vogue in France in the seventeenth century—those shoulder-knots which play so striking a part in the famous *Tale of a Tub* of Swift. You remember how

the three twin brothers of that allegorical fiction twist their father's will to find in it permission to wear on their dress braid, fringe, and tufts of ribbon. The shoulder-knots transformed later on into *aiguilletes* in the uniform of our officers, are suitable for military costume, because, being light and waving, they form an ornament of direction and a vivid image of movement. But they should only be worn at Court or in town, unless by the young dandies of society, or by pages, for it is evident that any appendage to dress which waves in the wind, clashes with physical gravity, and contradicts the feeling of moral gravity.

"Iphis sees in church a shoe of a new fashion, he looks at his own and blushes ; he no longer thinks himself well dressed : he had come to mass to show himself, and now he hides himself. See him kept by the foot in his room all the day." So says La Bruyère, and he uses this illustration to give a vivid idea of the importance of the *shoe* in costume, or at least in fashion. Next to the head-dress, there is nothing which attracts the eye more than the shoe, because it is natural that in looking at a man from head to foot, or from his feet to his head, the attention should be arrested by the extremities.

From the slipper without a quarter piece to a postilion's top-boots, from the pumps of the dancer to the hob-nailed shoes and rough gaiters of the gamekeeper, all shoes ought to be visibly made for their purpose, and in an extreme case their very suitability will make them beautiful. Here we may say with Montaigne, "*que la bienséance originelle dépend du service et de la*

commodité du corps." Let us recall the gentlemen painted by Vandyck and Wouvermans in their great top-boots. Even when they were on foot, imagination pictured them on horseback. The high tops of these boots, were they not in fact indicative of the protection necessary to the knee, that it might not strike itself against the holster of the pistol? Such a precaution, however, did not prevent the clock of the stocking worn with the boots from being ornamented when required with lace; but the wide boot of a Bassompierre was none the less made to show the habits of the cavalier, even though the rowel of the spur was not necessarily seen.

To bring vividly before the eye the connection between the dress and the function it is to discharge is certainly a merit, and there are certain parts of civilian garb which have no other. Those who in our own day wish to revive the fashion of wearing boots beneath which the trousers are drawn and concealed, are in the right, for nothing is more contrary to sense than to cover the leather of the boot with the cloth of the trousers, as we have long done in France. Just as in architecture, it is an axiom that the strong part should support the weak, so, in the economy of dress, it is a fundamental truth that the substantial should protect the delicate.

The modern boot is nothing but a reminiscence of the greaves worn by the Greeks in battle, and which our gaiters somewhat resemble. But the greaves, which were of metal or leather, only covered the leg and left the foot bare: the Romans turned them into boots by adding a vamp and soles, and, looking to the expression

used by Suetonius to designate the boots of Augustus, *tibialibus muniatur*, we must come to the conclusion that they were something more than mere boots; and that they protected the tibia by reaching to the knee.

Our ancestors placed on their shoes sometimes bows of ribbon when they wished to parade their red heels on the floors of princes, sometimes silver buckles when they desired to be studiously polite in the intercourse of middle-class life. They thus expressed, merely by the appearance of the shoe and its ornaments, either an inclination towards elegance or coquetry, or a simple desire to be polite—so true it is that the care bestowed on the toilet, according as it is excessive or controlled, betrays self-esteem, or is a mark of deference towards others.

To the artist who looks on a man dressed as the great painters did of whom we have already spoken, that is to say, as a walking portrait, bare hands are echoes of light, which it is well to moderate in order to give greater prominence to the light of the face. Hence the introduction of the glove in portraits where the hand would be too conspicuous and would be a rival to the face.

But the *glove*, so happily employed as a picturesque accessory by Titian, Velasquez, and Rembrandt, was not invented by them, for its use is traced back to antiquity: gloves were known four or five centuries before our time. According to Xenophon, the Persians wore gloves in the winter, and displayed as much luxury in them as in the rest of their dress. We may also believe that the gloves with which the Tartars and the Samoyedes cover their hands are of great antiquity, if we can give the name of

gloves to what are furs without divisions, that is to say without fingers.

In the Middle Ages, gloves were sometimes an ornament reserved for nobles and prelates, who often embellished them with precious stones, sometimes a mark of acknowledgment given to the lord by his vassal, when put into possession of a fief or a long leasehold, sometimes a love-token worn as a talisman on his helmet by a knight who hoped by it to be victorious. In the present day gloves are only an article of comfort or a sign of good breeding; but they vary according to their colour and the leather of which they are made.

Except as a symbol of mourning, black gloves are intolerable, because they extinguish, as under a layer of ink, what is of most importance in the human body, the instrument *par excellence* of universal language, the hand. Let the glove by its light colour be distinct from the dress of the man, that is sufficient. A bright colour, approaching pure white, would be out of place, unless it were drowned in waves of light at a brilliant soirée or a ball. Light blue, pearl grey, mauve, brown, peach, havane, chamois, fawn, and all other shades of the same depth, that is to say, not going higher in the scale of lightness, are those which appear to suit gloves for ordinary wear; and these colours will be generally used for them, when certain other colours are given up, which, in an article where elasticity is essential, would recall hard and unyielding substances, such as bronze, iron, and slate.

Again, thick gloves, cut out of strong leather like beaver, buckskin, buffalo and deerskin, the stout gloves

which falconers formerly wore to protect their fingers from the claws of the falcon, have a character of their own. The rough and soiled gloves of Cromwell, those gloves which the toils of war had unsewn and which suit so well his doublet worn by the halbert, and his dusty hat, have too an expression of their own, when we see him thus accoutred in his portraits, opening the coffin of Charles I., or closing the doors of the Parliament.

The æsthetic quality of the accessories of the dress depends for the most part on their connection with certain ideas or reminiscences which occur to all cultivated minds. There is more pleasure in guessing the use to which a thing is put or its suitability than in verifying it by actual observation, because we like better to look at objects with the eye of the imagination than to see them with our bodily sight. Gloves of reindeer skin lying forgotten on a table make us think immediately of the sportsman who passes his life among horses, in driving a britska, or in fox-hunting. How many things can we see in a glove which has covered a man's hand, and which retains the impression left by his nervous movements and the trembling of his fingers when under the sway of thought!

I can recall, in connection with this subject, one of those profound impressions which the observation of an apparently trifling and insignificant detail sometimes leaves. In March, 1849, when I was Director of Fine Arts to the Ministry of the Interior, I represented to M. Dufaure, at that time Minister, what a pity it was to make use of the Louvre for annual exhibitions, and so to hide periodically all the fine old masters behind a screen

of modern canvasses. As it happened, the palace of the Tuileries was then uninhabited, from the pavilion of Marsan to that of Flora. M. Dufaure conferred with General Changarnier, and all that part of the palace was placed at the disposal of the Director of Fine Arts, who for the first time was able to free the Louvre from its servitude. While inspecting the rooms of this deserted palace, I reached the door of a chamber which had remained closed for seven years, and of which the Queen Marie-Amélie had kept the key. It was the room which the Duke of Orleans had just left the day when he fractured his skull on the pavement. Nothing had been touched : papers, books, cigar-boxes, képis, sword-belts, a quantity of things were there, in the disorder in which he had left them. What struck me most, was to see on a table, thrown here and there, gloves of all colours and sorts. The life of this young man, divided between pleasure, hunting, and war, revealed itself in the appearance of these scattered gloves, some tumbled, others intact, some tried on, others still in their box. There were chamois gloves for driving, beaver for riding, dogskin, white lambskin, and kid, and all these varieties of the toilette had there a singular and striking meaning. But the leather of these gloves had long since shrunk : the lambskin was stiff, the kid like parchment, and these lifeless objects, which told so plainly the story of the habits of the young man of fashion who had worn them, told also of his death.

So, whether we examine it as a whole or in detail, the costume of a man is or ought to be an external indication of the part he has to play, of his condition, and

disposition, and, consequently, it ought to vary according to the profession he follows, in other words, according as he is engaged in a life of contemplation, a civilian's, or a soldier's life. To each of these three chief varieties—not to mention shades of difference—there correspond some invariable principles, which it is important to sum up. A long and easy garment, whose length is almost continuous, whose colour is dark, whose ornaments are annular, suits priests, magistrates, monks, and generally men whose life is sedentary and studious, that is to say, the men of contemplation. Short coats, broad and tight belts, which facilitate the movements by confining the viscera; the ease of breeches, the extremities free, the legs at liberty, as in the uniform of the foot soldier, or protected as in that of the cavalry; boots at once strong and elastic, like Hessian boots; ornaments of direction, that is to say, waving appendages, particularly in the head-dress; gay and gallant colours—such are the varieties demanded by military dress.

As regards civilian costume, we may say that it holds a middle place between the other two, and that the different degrees of width or scantiness, length or shortness, simplicity or richness of ornament, lightness or darkness, airiness or gravity, a wish to give freedom to the movements, or a calmness that is intended to be apparent—ought to be in keeping with the profession of a man, with the duties he has to fulfil, and, so to speak, with the temperament of each mind.

Is it necessary to add that in man's dress, as in everything else, the first and absolute law which must govern all suitability is harmony? Is it necessary to say that

the plumed felt of Cinq Mars would be ridiculous on the head of a man dressed in our scanty frock coat, and that the graceful cap of a Valois does not assimilate except with the easy, light, and gay garb of those personages? Lastly, is it not a truth which our feelings corroborate, that ornamental facings, collars of a different colour to the coat, skirts turned back, edgings, braid, linings intended to be seen, top-boots, and other similar details, just because they go well with military uniform, would be out of place in the dress of a civilian? That unity should be expressed by the exterior of the dress is still more necessary in woman's attire, because variety, alternation, and contrast are as spices invented by the coquetry of the sex, means of attracting and pleasing which, in man, should be subordinate to his wish that his personal habits, his cast of thought, his duties in life, and his character, may be apparent at a glance.

And now, to those who look upon such questions as trivial, we will say, and insist upon saying, that a man's dress is also the garb of his thoughts. The proof of this is that to bring about an æsthetic alteration in costume, requires nothing short of a complete change both in religious and moral ideas. At the time when the followers of St. Simon wished and hoped to found a new religion, they were seen to assume a new dress. On the 6th of June, 1832, to the roar of the cannon of St. Méry, they opened the doors of their retreat at Ménilmontant, to march in public procession, with a sort of religious solemnity, to the ceremony of assuming the new garb. Their uniform, designed by Edouard Talabot, was as elegant as it was simple; a blue *justaucorps* opening in

front over a waistcoat which buttoned behind, a leather belt, white trousers, and a red cap—this was what composed it: the neck was bare, and the beard was to be worn long, in the Oriental fashion.

The ceremony of assuming the dress was the occasion of strange scenes. Father Enfantin, who had been absent for three days, presented himself at two o'clock before the eyes of the brotherhood, who awaited him with emotion and meditation. As he appeared, there passed through the faithful, as it were, a sudden thrill of admiration and affection, and they all began to sing in chorus. . . . Meanwhile, he advanced with a slow and majestic step, his head bare, his face beaming. . . . After he had spoken, the Father, assisted by one of his disciples, assumed the apostolic habit. Then helping in his turn the brother who had assisted him, he said, "This waistcoat is the symbol of the fraternity: no one can put it on without the help of one of his brethren. If it has this inconvenience, that it renders assistance indispensable, it has also the advantage of reminding us each time of the ruling idea of the Association." *

No, nothing is trivial which may be a reflection of thought. If in our age a uniform costume has succeeded the intentional varieties which were the outward marks of social distinctions, it is because uniformity is now an external declaration of the principles of civil equality and liberty, inaugurated in the world by the French Revolution. I say Liberty, for formerly everything was regulated, settled, and classified according to the laws of a rigid etiquette. The royal will of Louis XIV. laid down

* *Histoire de dix ans*, by Louis Blanc, iii., 322-3.

regulations for the toilette as well as for commerce, industry, and literature. Not to mention the *justaucorps à brevet*, invented by the King, as though to hint at the deference of the courtiers who surrounded him, the costume of Frenchmen was at that time subject to regulations, which, without being written down, were obeyed. Velvet, satin, frieze, and cloth were to be worn in winter, silesias and camlets in spring, and taffetas in summer.

The rule of the three unities—may I be forgiven for saying it!—was not more rigorous than the obligation to begin wearing furs on All Saints' Day, to leave off muffs at Easter, and English point after Longchamps. Now people may dress themselves as they please, but under the eye of public opinion, under the surveillance of ridicule which will not allow the liberty assumed in every-day costume to go so far as to set equality at nought.

But, alas! the uniformity of civilian garb does not prevent variety in military dress, and if Europe in a frock coat testifies to the fraternity of nations, Russian, Austrian, and English uniforms, the Prussians in blue, our own Turcos in turbans, and our infantry in red trousers, say plainly that the principle of war is deep-rooted in this old soil, tilled by the philosophy of so many centuries, and that the peace of the world is only a dream.

XII.

IN A WOMAN'S DRESS THE SELECTION OF THE MATERIAL IS THE FIRST CONSIDERATION, IN THAT RELATIVE BEAUTY WHICH INDICATES THE WEARER'S CHARACTER.

BEFORE a woman has put on the dress she intends wearing, before she has even chosen its shape or ordered the style in which it is to be made, something of her fancies or of her mood has betrayed itself in the selection of the material that has attracted her attention and decided her choice. How many degrees in the scale of sentiment can be traversed, between the austerity of a coarse cloth and the soft luxuriance of a foulard! How many varieties exist, between the flannel which formerly sufficed the modest grace of Athenian maidens, and the rich silk whose rustlings accompany a woman's movements and announce her approach!

And, first, it is from their relation to light that materials derive their characteristics. Each, independent of its price, is distinguished at the first glance by its particular assimilation with the daylight. Some textures absorb the rays, like wool, others vividly reflect them, like satin, others deaden them, like cloth, or subdue them, like velvet.

If organdie is simple, tarlatane modest, barège discreet, if the "holy muslin" is frequently and wisely recommended, it is chiefly because these materials, being transparent, have a soft effect and refuse to shine. If there is a shade of gravity in poul-de-soie, in faille, in gros-de-Naples, it is because the texture of these silks slightly subdues their brilliancy, whilst slight taffetas and thin silks, such as the Florentine or the Persian tissues made

at Avignon, offer more distinctly the contrasts of brightness and shadow, and entrap in their long graceful folds the rays of light. These bright gleams are often very striking in materials which imitate silk, like alpacas, but they have greyer shades, which soften the sheen. If there is a superb effect of quiet wealth in silk velvet, it is owing to the beauty of its deep, warm tones, which dissolve into each other with the richness of their shadows. By mixing wool with silk or with alpacas or goat's hair, to produce Irish poplin, sultane, alpaca, and mohair, these materials are rendered less glossy than pure silk, and, whilst dimming their brilliancy, the wool gives them a softly luxuriant effect which associates itself with domestic life and family virtues.

Following the same train of thought, the mixture of lustrous wools and cotton, that forms dull heavy looking materials, like Orleans cloth, suggests simplicity and comfort. Whilst pure cotton fabrics, jaconet, cambric and nansouk, display, after being ironed, a clearness of folds, a freshness of appearance, which seem to indicate a kind of moral purity, and this effect is doubly striking in pieces of linen thread, like ticking or lawn.

Thus the texture of the material has an expression by the manner in which it is affected by the light, *i.e.* by the way in which the rays are absorbed or reflected by it. This character is infinitely varied by the material being plain, striped, quilted or figured with large spots or small flowers, and by the arrangement of these ornaments, whether successive or alternate, abundant or rare, unobtrusive or striking, dispersed or closely set, carelessly or regularly placed.

The stripe? It immediately changes the style of a material; producing an elongated effect, if vertical, and a widening effect if horizontal. Oblique, the stripe conveys an idea of absolute freedom, for it does not correspond either with the movement of the figure or with its repose. From the moment the stripe is used to vary a dress, the result is the very contrary of unity, especially if the stripes are alternate either in colour or width; for instance a wide stripe succeeding a narrow one, or a rose-coloured a red one.

Between plain and striped materials the same difference exists as between a rubbed or stumped drawing and a print. A severe painter, like Ingres, for instance, who wished to give a particular style to his works, preferred them rubbed, because the expression of the form seemed to him grandest when most simple, and because the grace of the pencil stroke, and the freedom of the hatching process are apt to degenerate into mere prettiness, and thus attract the attention of the spectator to the manner of expressing the form rather than to the form expressed. On the other hand, the engraver, wishing to reproduce a design, either shaded, rubbed or merely of pencil strokes, invents lines, which, while producing the same amount of black on the print, by their flow, their flexibility, their undulations and their elegant curves, enliven the master's severe outline, being spaced out over the lighter parts, and brought closer together in the shadows.

Now look at a striped material: we might say it engraves itself; the cross lines, which in the loom are perfectly regular, are broken on the finished dress; their parallelism is disturbed with each movement; they dis-

perse in one place to reunite in another; they undulate with every ripple of the surface and straighten themselves in obscure folds. The stripe has a slightly fantastic style, because it provokes and amuses the eye, contrasting with the dignity of plain materials which rest the sight. The one appears frivolous because the other is always quiet.

But should the stripe be complicated by a second, the two stripes must unfortunately be cut at right angles. In fact, nothing is more unbecoming than a checked material made into a dress, particularly in the bodice, because the perfect regularity of the squares renders the least disparity in the shoulders, the clavicles, and the bust, strikingly conspicuous.

In modelling the human figure, the Supreme Designer seems, it is true, to have left some traces of the original squares, but the verticals and horizontals, on which the figure is constructed, have been nearly everywhere effaced, so that nature, not being chained to rigorous lines, could freely give birth to innumerable individuals, all resembling the original type, but all differing through the endless accidents of life. The primeval type could only be restored in the network of the Divine geometry.

However, if the check is extremely small, this difficulty no longer exists; the texture appears only shaded and unity is re-established. And the same result ensues if, of two stripes cut at right angles, one subdues the other, either through depth of tone, or width of line, for then the squares disappear and simply form an additional variety in the stripe; but this can only result from one of the shades being three times deeper than the other, and the first line three times wider than the second. This re-

mark may be verified in the Scotch or tartan silks, where the stripes, although crossing at right angles, seldom form distinct squares, because they are continually interrupted by a change of tint. Here, for instance, a vivid red deepens on one side into brown and on the other fades into pale pink. Or there, blue rectangles lose themselves in a green line, or meeting poppy, change into violet; sometimes the material is brightened in one part by a golden yellow which merges into unbleached white, while passing through it. Then come fine clear lines, which, placed at uneven distances, enlarge the squares on all sides and thus soften their rigid effect. But whatever the design of a tartan may be, the extreme variety of colour and the complicated and changing stripes produce a fancy material, wholly repugnant, by its characteristic style, to the dignity of dress, although very suitable for children and when worn short, for young girls. . . . But is it not wonderful that the same principles which govern greater things rule also lesser, and that unity is a necessity of nobleness in the apparently most frivolous art, as well as the secret of greatness in the highest efforts of the human mind!

With regard to *chiné* taffetas, and brocaded silks, they appear uniform or plain, if the pattern laid on is sufficiently pronounced to produce at a distance a general tone of colour. But however distantly or closely we look at the black embroidered Lyonese silks, where the flowers are raised on the surface in various colours, they never produce a uniform effect, owing to the scantiness of the ornaments, because the little flowers are added in relief, and are distinct from the background, like the

plastered touches on an artist's canvas. In this case the embroideries look better in alternate colours and places. All the advantages of variety are then secured, the flowers for instance being successively yellow, green, and red, but erect in one shade, slanting in another, or placed in turn now from left to right, now from right to left.

Figured silk is composed of two different tints: for instance, garnet branches on a black ground produce a richness, which, although very striking, is somewhat severe; less severe, however, than the shaded brocades, such as pale blue on dark blue, or dull heavy black on glossy brilliant black. The dignity of female dress is increased by everything which allows uniformity to predominate, whilst relieving it by slight variations, formed by designs laid on in the same tints, by some quiet change of colour, or by the workman's labour, who, by passing the material through a calender to water it, makes serpentine threads of light on the surface, and thus varies the texture without introducing any new element of design or colour.

When Paul Veronese, in the *Marriage of Cana*, shows us magnificent figured stuffs, on which he lavishes all the varieties of tints and striking contrasts, it is remarkable that the robes of state, the splendid damasks, the amber silks, the emerald velvets are reserved for the musicians who attend the banquet and the cup-bearers, without mentioning the bride and bridegroom, whilst the Virgin and Christ and those who are in the seats of honour, are simply clad in woollen tunics of pure red and blue. So that even in representing an Oriental festival, which

enabled him to display all the splendour procurable by Eastern wealth, the great master instinctively submitted to the conventional feelings which form the esthetics of dress, and which make themselves, before all, felt in the character of the textures.

We have stated the moral expressions of colour and how they should be mingled. In a woman's head-dress they should blend with the shade of her hair, which almost invariably corresponds with her complexion and with the colour of her eyes. Following the bent of her humour, or the train of her thoughts, a woman occupied with her dress would choose pure or mixed, striking or modest shades, those which ascend from deep violet to brilliant yellow by the cold scale of pale mauve, pure blue, turquoise, green, and sulphur, or those that descend from yellow to violet by the warm scale of saffron, orange, capucine, red, and garnet. But since a secret relationship exists between the moral temperament and the physical colours of the eyes, hair, and complexion, an involuntary harmony is at once established between the studied choice dictated by vanity, and that which results from the usual or a passing state of mind. The colour most becoming to a woman's beauty is generally that which is an indication of her character. In the selection of materials, without reference to colour, I imagine that a prudent, intelligent young woman would chose plaids for her children, spotted or striped foulards for young girls. She would reserve for herself the poult-de-soie and the taffeta, the plain velvets, and all materials which are so finely striped that they become self-coloured. For her elder sister

she would buy embroidered Lyonesse silks, failles with a raised pattern, leaving for the matrons and grand-parents satins, rich brocades, and all fancy velvets, either figured or à la reine. Other considerations are, of course, to be taken into account in the choice of materials—the season, the climate, the purpose for which the dress is intended are to be remembered; and the variety of manufactures, the inventions of industrial genius, are sufficiently numerous to satisfy all the requirements of a graceful fancy inspired by the desire for beauty in every-day life.

Once in possession of the abundant means of which æsthetic taste can dispose—for this generous science does not regard money—the woman with some latent taste, or who has consulted one who is an authority on fashion, will procure the most varied materials in colour, design, and price, assigning to each its destination. She reserves for the garden, sea-side, or occasional costumes, all textures least liable to crease—sultane, mohair, foulard—and she chooses them in two shades of the same tint, like dun and mouse-colour. She adds to the list Vichy linen, Indian muslin, unbleached tussore, imitations of nankeen with white stripes, everything refreshing to the eye.

For a dinner in the country, or an evening at the “casino,” she provides a straw-coloured or a French grey crêpe-de-chine; and for wearing over coloured taffeta or satin she buys white tarlatane, silk grenadine, and Chambéry gauze, which by their transparency allow the under colours to show through a light veil, like a delicate haze in painting. Foreseeing a journey, she prepares a violet or brown poplin, a dark blue water-proof, and a deep green hood. If races are anticipated,

the expert who accompanies her, advises her to take several yards of cloth, and—if desirous to produce an effect—of white cloth. Cloth is very suitable to those intermediate seasons when one can imagine the temperature sufficiently cold to offer an excuse for warm clothing.

But materials—this women know well—change colour by day and candle-light. They are aware that their dress would not be of the same tint by artificial light as it is in the daytime. And therefore the *élégante*, whom we have been watching whilst she selected her materials, enters, at noon, a lighted room, in order to judge the effects of the yellow flames of candles, gas, or lamps upon her evening dresses.

She discovers that the colour of the texture gains or loses by candle-light according to the amount of yellow contained in it. Violet, which is the complementary colour to yellow, is decomposed, the blue disappears, and it becomes red. Blue, if pure, borders on green; if dark it appears harsh and black, and if pale it loses colour and becomes grey. The faded blues, whose tint by daylight is without tone, under a yellow flame take a turquoise hue; but in revenge, turquoise silk, which by sunlight is beautiful, loses its brilliancy and appears faded.

In ascending the scale of cold colours, a fashionable woman notices that yellow greens are the prettiest for evening wear. Thus, apple green is not far from emerald, emerald, without changing tint, gains brilliancy on one side, richness on the other. Peacock green becomes yellowish in a ballroom—the blue is destroyed by the strong light in which yellow materials, par-

ticularly satins, plushes, and silks, appear to best advantage. Amber, already beautiful, acquires richness; straw-colour slightly reddens in the folds; sulphur does not change; and pink, which mixed with yellow produces the salmon tint, disappears in the light to reassert itself in the shadows. But there is nothing, perhaps, more charming than maize, which, without losing its peculiar qualities, gains an imperceptible warmth of tint and becomes exquisite.

The same effect is produced in red shades, for the yellow glare of evening lights, which is so fatal to blue, enhances their tone and augments their splendour. Ruby is heightened in its beauty, particularly in plush materials; orange-red brightens; cerise approaches poppy; poppy, capucine, which, in turn, borders on orange. Orange takes a flame colour. Black and white do not escape the action of artificial light; blue blacks, those beautiful blacks so well named after the raven's wing, become dull and heavy, because they do not retain the blue shade which gives them life and depth. White, on the contrary, improves at night, and, if faded, revives. For this reason actresses often ask for a white that has lost its freshness, believing that the footlights will restore the lost brilliancy. This white is usually called *blanc-de-lumière*. A colour which retains its charm is silver grey: always pleasing and distinguished, it even gains a slightly rose coloured hue. But should the grey contain a suspicion of blue, like pearl grey, the blue tint is lost, and the distinctive characteristic of pearl grey disappears.

A scientific man would explain these changes by the optical blending of hues, the property of complementary

colours, and the law of simultaneous contrast, but a woman once warned of their uncertainty does not trouble science to account for it. She does not require its aid in making herself beautiful. But is not fashion the most imperious ruler over a woman's choice, when she occupies herself with the art of dress? Yes, certainly, and yet whatever may be the caprices of this sovereign, so renowned for her vagaries, and who is believed to be so independent, and so absolute, fashion herself submits—who would believe it?—to a secret logic: she is the slave of certain great laws which she knows by instinct, and which she dares not disobey.

XIII.

OVER AND ABOVE THE IMMUTABLE LAWS OF BEAUTY, WOMEN'S DRESS VARIES, AND SHOULD VARY, ACCORDING TO THEIR FIGURES, COMPLEXIONS, AGES, AND DISPOSITIONS; BUT HOWEVER NUMEROUS THE VARIATIONS OF THE TOILET MAY BE, THEY CAN ALL BE REDUCED TO THREE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERISTICS—SEVERITY, GRACE, AND MAGNIFICENCE.

How many things require study in a woman whom one wishes to dress in a manner suitable to the style of her face, of her figure, and of her temperament! How much intelligence, adaptation, and tact! What should the artist not know or not guess, who undertakes to adorn nature, in her *chef-d'œuvre*, to embellish a living moving beauty, to whom presently all will submit, but only when the assistance of art has been implored and obtained!

Yes, it is only a true artist that can render the clothing of the human body a decoration, either by guiding a woman in her choice, or by dressing her according to her

height and carriage, and the colour of her hair and skin, and in a manner suitable to her social position, and also to the particular bent of her mind—I was about to say, her heart. And first, we must consider her height. A woman may be tall and slender, or tall and stout; she may be little and slight, or very short and robust: to these four varieties of stature belong inevitably different styles of dress—but which? And this is a delicate question. In a painter's eyes the women, who in passing attract his attention, are moving portraits. He can say, and generally does say, on seeing them—If I had to paint them, I should strongly accentuate their physical characteristics, in order to delineate their moral nature. I should lay stress on the elegance of one, the grace of another; I should dwell upon the majesty of this one, and bring the embonpoint of that one into full relief. If requisite, I should not hesitate to slightly exaggerate the most distinctive features in certain persons, to give more expression to their portraits.

It is a law in painting of the highest style to add to a fact sooner than to detract from it. Michael Angelo, to express strength more forcibly, sometimes became violent. Correggio, fearing that his figures may not be sufficiently pleasing, exaggerates their grace, and where Rubens heightens the lights, Rembrandt deepens the shadows. But can the example of the great masters be followed by the artist who wishes to adorn a woman by her attire? No; because the deceptions of the painter are imagined at the expense of truth, and of a superior truth, while the art of the ruling modiste is to create a happy illusion. One deceives in order to give reality to what is purely

imaginative, the other to conceal defects which are living, palpable truths.

It is the same with a woman's dress as it is with her head-dress. The style of her dress should depend on the shape of her nose, just as the colours she wears should harmonize with the tint of her complexion and the shades of her hair. If the nose is strongly characteristic the dress may be the same, particularly if the face and carriage indicate pride. But what is understood by a toilet of characteristic style? This question resolves itself, in virtue of the first principles of decorative art, into an inquiry whether repetition is grander than alternation, whether consonance is more dignified than contrast. Colours very slightly varied, lines scarcely interrupted, great simplicity even with richness, plain materials, sober trimmings, these form a severe costume.

On the contrary, alternation, and diversity of tints, broken lines, piquant contrasts, trimmings varied and impromptu—these are the distinguishing marks of the charming fantastic costumes the French call *toilettes de genre*, which are so becoming to a person with a slightly *retroussé* or irregular nose, an attractive face, and mischievous eyes. We have thus two extremes, austerity and coquetry, or, if it is preferred, pride and grace, and the medium would be quiet elegance. But in the intervals between these three styles—we might again say these three orders, Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian—we find space for every necessary degree of severity or attractive charm, of magnificence or delicacy, of simplicity or richness. In approaching the one, in receding from the other, it is easy with additions or deductions to create all

the modifications which the innumerable types of beauty can require. But how to fulfil these conditions, how to reconcile them with the exigencies of fashion, while considering before everything else the height and the figure? This we must now examine.

XIV.

OF ALL THE DETAILS WHICH FORM A WOMAN'S DRESS THERE IS NOT ONE WITHOUT CHARACTER, AND THAT DOES NOT CONTRIBUTE ITS SHARE IN GIVING THE TOILET ITS PARTICULAR STYLE.

WITHOUT recurring to a woman's head-dress, which crowns her apparel, and is inseparable from it, we may affirm that the bodice, the sleeves, the collar, the ruff, the girdle, the basques, the skirt, the tunic, the flounces, the cross-bands, the ruches, the paletot, the tippet, the jacket, the waistcoat, the shawl, and the mantle, all these important items of the toilet decide its character according to the manner in which they are made, trimmed, and worn.

The bodice. To hide, yet to display, or rather to indicate and yet disclose, are the two objects of the bodice; but it must not be forgotten that often what is concealed is just that which is most wished to be displayed. The significance of the bodice results from this fact. If it is high, it expresses, or seems to express, modesty, retiring virtues. Opened like a shawl or heart shape, it preserves the same character; at all events in a greater degree than the bodice cut squarely, *à la Raphael*, or cut low and round, which attracts the attention to the shape of the neck, to the shoulders, to the outline of the bust. And here the ascendancy of fashion, or rather the

despotism of custom, makes itself felt, for the most delicate creatures, girls whose imperfectly developed figure show their tender age, are condemned by women anxious to conceal their own waning youth to wear low bodices and bare arms. It is true that muslin neckerchiefs, tulle



LOW ROUNDED BODICE.

habit-shirts, and (by elderly women) lace tippets are sometimes worn, to veil the disclosures made by the open bodice.

But how many trifles scarcely noticed by men add to the impression made upon them by a woman's dress! What an air of naïveté and innocence is produced by a sailor's bodice, so becoming to young girls, worn with a sailor's collar and loose cravat! What a difference

there is between a high close bodice ornamented simply by a lace frill and one with facings, which seems open to the eyes and fancy, through displaying the material with which it is lined, and which in order to be more conspicuous is made of a striking



SQUARE CUT BODICE.

colour and of a different texture ! And the quieter the outside shade the more brilliant is usually the inner one.

For instance, on a bodice of grey mauve cashmere, or of unbleached foulard, the facings would probably be distinct in rose-de-chine taffeta, in garnet velvet, or in brown satin, for it is considered in good taste to use the richest material in that part of the dress which shows least. From another point of view the bodice is of

great importance, because a woman displays the beauty of her figure above the waist, and if her bust have any defects, she can modify them, by deceiving the eye by the shape and accessories of her bodice. A short waist is lengthened by the bodice being trimmed with braces or straps joining at the sash, or by being prolonged



ODETTE BODICE.

to a point in front and small basques behind ; or again, it can be connected with the second skirt and form a tunic without interruption, *i.e.* without sash or bow. On the other hand a woman can conceal her excessive thinness by opening her dress in a square, or by trimming it with an imitation of a square berthia by a ruche, a crossband, a velvet or any other ornament, or even, if it is season-

able, by means of a small round tippet which would conceal the height of the bust, all horizontal lines having the property of giving width, because they are directly opposed to slender forms.

The varieties of the bodice are numerous. Heat, cold, a walk, a ride, a journey, morning dress, full dress,



CORSELET AND BASQUES.

the "casino," the sea-side, are all pretexts—what have I said—are serious reasons for varying the garment which covers a woman's heart and chest. Here the dread of a cold wind has dictated the selection of a double-breasted bodice buttoned on one side like a military great coat; there, the Odette bodice, clinging to the figure until it

reaches the hips, has been chosen by a woman who can bear the exposure of her chest even on a spring day. Another wears a Watteau bodice, *i.e.*, made with a sacque, which lengthens her waist and gives her elegance. This one prefers a Marie-Antoinette, which crosses the chest and hooks at the side with a charming rustic grace ; and that one has put a black silk corselet over a violet dress—a graceful allusion to the breastplate of the valiant knights of old, an ironical imitation of armour, which recalls to me Jean Paul's cutting remark, "*Les femmes sont comme des guerriers ; elles jettent leurs armes quand elles s'avouent vaincues.*"

The sleeves. Artists, who paint in a particular or fancy style, I should rather say who have a taste for certain selected forms, have always been careful to give their female figures beautiful arms, well covered with flesh, because weak, and above all thin arms, denote bad health and an enfeebled race. Raphael in his frescoes, Ingres in his pictures, have delineated powerful arms, attached to the shoulders by solid muscles. Not only the outlines are more pleasing, but the elbow joint and the transition from the fore-arm to the wrist appear comparatively delicate. The sleeves then have much interest in women's attire. The leg of mutton or gigot sleeves, so long worn, were invented to conceal the defects of the arm, a defect much more common in France than in Italy ; but the ostensible reason was, that they made the waist appear smaller. In the time of the Valois ladies wore puffs at the shoulders, probably to give delicacy to the neck and grace to the carriage of the head. They frequently covered the arms with muslin sleeves, relieved

from shoulder to wrist by light knots of ribbon. When the sleeves are not made in linen it is essential that they should be of the same colour as the first or under petticoat—unless they belong to the tunic—for if made of a different shade the arms would look as though they belonged to another body. This retention of the colour of the petticoat is necessary even when the sleeves are of a transparent material like tulle, silk, or woollen grenadine, or Chambéry gauze. White, being achromatic, is the sole exception, and sleeves of muslin, nansouk, or cambric may be regarded as under-sleeves.

The arm, being the chief instrument of gesture, always attracts notice. Nothing is more expressive, more individual; and a woman describing a dress would never omit to mention the sleeves. There are many varieties in this portion of feminine attire, and many shades of expression, but it is scarcely necessary to add that these shades not only indicate the tendency of the mind and the desire to please, but they add to the completeness of the dress, and assist in rendering it suitable for its purpose in the occupations of life. Are not the long open sleeves which distinguished the costumes of the varlets of former days, and which are still called page sleeves, a striking illustration of the freedom required for their arms in waiting upon the knights and ladies at table, in handing a dish to the lady of the manor? When the long sleeves are widened at the opening like pagoda sleeves, copied from the Chinese, it surely is with the intention of causing the hands to appear smaller by the contrast with the aperture from which they emerge. If the sleeve is trimmed with

epaulets above, it is to give width to deficient shoulders, and if the epaulet falls over jockey sleeves it is perhaps to conceal too great angularity. With regard to elbow sleeves, their width of course depends upon the size of the arm; but they are usually relieved by some orna-



DOLMAN, WITH PAGE SLEEVES.

ments, facings, imitation buttons, or any other trimming that matches the under petticoat.

In the last century, under Louis XV., the sleeve, restrained at or below the elbow by a ribbon favour, escaped and widened by means of a flounce or of a piece of embroidery; but this shape is inelegant, if too suddenly

enlarged : it was called the sabot sleeve. The intuition of coquetry only can advise when the sleeve may be opened to the elbow to allow a puffing to pass through ;



MÉDICIS RUFF.

when it may be slashed to display the lace underneath, or finished with ruffled cuffs to show off the delicacy of the hand. When this is done, the ruffles

should match the other linen ornaments used in the bodice.

The collar. The grace of the head largely depends upon its support; consequently the shape of the collar and of the ruff require careful consideration, for they



TURNED DOWN COLLAR AND BASQUES WITH FACINGS.

relieve the outlines of the throat, accompany and frame it, show it off by contrast or by consonance, and make the first transition between the head and the shoulders, the unclothed and the clothed.

The collar and the ruff are ornaments which have reference to the axis of growth and to individual out-

lines. It is, then, natural that they should be peripheric, that is annular, and that they should match the shape of the neck by reproducing its roundness, thus resembling the astragal below the Grecian capital. There are some imposing persons whose powerful and rigid necks recall



GABRIELLE RUFF AND PUFFED SLEEVES.

the implantation of the Doric column: they should wear light collars and ruffs, to restore feminine characteristics to their manly proportions. Others, with slender throats, resembling Ionic columns, display this flexibility by lowering their collars; but, if the collar is low and very open, if shaped in points, or at right angles in front, like

a sailor's collar, it becomes almost indispensable for them to redeem these angles and to relieve this mass of white by a circular ornament, either a velvet necklet, a loose cravat, or a neck ribbon, according to the wearer's age.

No doubt there is dignity and even an air of distinction in the high stiff ruffs worn by Marie de Medicis, and named after her. Regularly and methodically arranged, the starched and rigid laces seemed to mount guard over the head, like the sentinels of dress. But this style of ruff could only be suitable for a person of high rank, whose features were strongly marked. Quite different is the character of the Gabrielle ruff, which, hiding the lower part of the sinews of the neck under a cloud of gauze or a quilling of lawn, forms a light frame for the face, whilst it discreetly covers the chest. It is easy to see in how many ways the appearance of this feminine ornament can be varied. Who does not associate with a plain low collar a frank open face, and whether this collar is bent down like a boy's or falls over a student's cravat, it gives a mischievous expression to a young woman's dress, adding piquancy to her charms?

As we have before remarked, this wonderful structure of the human body, having at the same time the faculty of growth, which belongs to a plant, and the power of movement, which characterises living beings, in spite of the resistance offered by the law of inertia—that is of attraction—this human body, above all a woman's body should be so clothed and adorned that the three forces—growth, gravity, and movement—may be recalled in her attire. And why? Because the beauty of the body, with its flat surfaces, projections, and depressions, depends

upon the warfare continually waged between these three forces. It is in allusion to the growth of the human plant that crowns, ruffs, necklets, surround the vertical axis, augmenting by their circular forms the rotundity of those parts which are naturally round.

It is the same with the girdle.

The girdle marks the transition between the parts displayed and those hidden. It is the ring of the body, and betrays its delicate or sturdy proportions. But the body having two important aspects, the ring which encloses it cannot dispense with an ornament. Hence innumerable graceful inventions have resulted ; the charming knots, so easily varied, becoming at will either simple, magnificent, rich, coquettish, or delicate. Now a velvet rosette closes the sash, now a satin one, with floating ends escaping from between two bows, or a knot with long pendants forming a scarf ; or perhaps a large double bow with wide-spreading ends falling in graceful folds. Sometimes the sash forms a basque, which being deeper at the sides serves to decorate the hips.

It is scarcely necessary to add that the accessories of the material, the fringes, gimps, and lace trimmings, help to enrich the bows of the sash, and that a woman may give them, according to her fancy, a stamp of simplicity or richness, of neatness or negligence. Is there anything, for example, more expressive for a costume for the races or the country house, than the odalisque sash, falling halfway down the side of the skirt with easy nonchalance, and recalling vividly by its name and form that houri who was too careless to attend to the details of her dress ? But where should the bow be placed ? There

is no doubt that it is more becoming and graceful at the back than in front. Below the chest a bow is useless and cumbersome, unless it is placed there to soften the



ODALISQUE SASH. DRESS WITH TRAIN AND GATHERED FLOUNCES.

extreme simplicity of a young girl's dress. The front of the female form is sufficiently adorned by the features, the eyes, the expression of the mouth, the outlines of

the figure and throat. It is, then, expedient to reserve some ornaments for the back of the dress, and to put the sash knots behind, for they always look well, even if not very handsome.

There is one ornament which always adapts itself to a bodice, regardless of fashion. I allude to the basque. Rounded, squared, or pointed, to suit the figure they are to embellish, longer in front than behind, or behind than in front, the basques form a transition between the bodice and the skirt. By prolonging the bodice over the skirt, they prevent the former ending abruptly at the waist-belt.

If they are divided at the back, cut short with two buttons placed near together, they are called postilion-basques, and acquire that piquancy which results from any feminine garment imitating the roughness of manly apparel. Nothing is better adapted to a riding-habit than basques trimmed with little buttoned pockets, resembling miniature cartridge-cases, perhaps prepared for warlike expeditions. Basques can be made according to fancy: indented or notched, quilled or scalloped, bordered with fringe, trimmed with flounces or lace, relieved with braid, embellished with one or more bands of satin, or, complicated with facings, their expression will not be much altered, the vagaries of fashion cannot effect any great change in them.

The skirt. This part of the dress being only designed to cover and conceal, should not offer the least analogy to the shape of the body. During the Directory, the women of Paris, mad with their own beauty, walked in the public gardens wearing statuesque costumes, meant to imitate the clinging linen draperies with which the antique sculp-

tors often clothed their figures. But what is charming in the statue of a god, the intangible type of eternal beauty, is totally inappropriate in a living, palpable being, who only represents a moment in the universal creation. However, without indicating the hidden form by its construction, the dress should recall the circular ornament, so that, even in the wave of its changing folds and floating circumference, the skirt should be connected with the girdle, the collar, and necklet, and thus recall the vertical axis around which it moves. But besides its circular trimmings, the skirt admits of ornaments on all sides. It is because women understand this, that they have invented a second skirt; this one can be draped, removed, raised, thrown behind, lengthened or shortened, allowing modifications which would be impossible with the first.

What is the connection established by good taste between the two skirts? If chosen of the same colour and of the same material, they give the dress that severe appearance which results from uniformity, unless the material is striped, brocaded, chiné, or figured, when it contains in itself a sufficient element of variety. Should the under skirt, for instance, be of pink and white stripes, the second skirt may be made like it without monotony. But if the first is plain, there would be austerity in not changing the tone of the second. Let us imagine the one in violet silk, the other in yellow taffeta, —these two complementary colours harmonise perfectly, —and to soften the contrast it would be well to scatter violet flowers over the yellow taffeta, thus redeeming the brightness of opposition by the recurrence of conformity.

Fashion decides as she pleases. It is always permissible, without open resistance, to interpret her decrees and to use some discretion in obeying her commands. "*L'Extraordinaire du Mercure galant*" of 1678—for double skirts were worn in the reign of Louis XIV., and even in the sixteenth century—advises the selection of two entirely different colours for the upper and lower skirts; but if one is to be lighter than the other, should it be the upper or lower? That depends on circumstances.

A little woman should not put the darker shade below, because at a distance a person's height appears to end with the lighter one, and is consequently shortened; and by the same rule a tall woman diminishes her stature, by wearing a petticoat, which by its deep shade, escapes notice, leaving only the upper skirt visible.

It is hardly necessary to add that a train or a half-trained dress is ridiculous in a street costume, and that for walking, or for visiting any public place, for instance a picture gallery, the skirt should clear the ground, although it is widened or narrowed according to the fashion. But it is chiefly in the upper skirt, or in the tunic that replaces it, that the character of the dress is shown. There in the draping, the plaiting, the raising, the numerous varieties of moral physiognomy, and of the proprieties of dress are displayed, according to the wearer's age, height, and rank, and the multiplied degrees of beauty and grace, for women have a hundred ways of being beautiful, a hundred ways of being pretty. Young girls, who are generally thin, can, when discontented with the simple skirt most becoming to their age, wear high plaits on the hips; but the puff, that is the

bunch at the back of the dress, if at all enlarged has a fast appearance, which would strike us disagreeably, if we were not accustomed to it, by its general use.

Whether the upper skirt is draped in front, or flattened forming an apron, it is equally suitable, although the latter shape is most becoming to young girls. At the side, however, the tunic can be looped, slightly or decidedly, it can be folded in deep plaits, or rippled with small gathers, it can be raised to join a jet buckle, or twisted several times to form one of those shells which recall the classic Greek draperies.

Sometimes dressmakers hide the looping at the sides under a large basque. Some hold it by a satin rosette, others suspend it to a buttoned velvet strap. By these means a woman's dress is adorned on both sides; but the similarity of the two sides is not absolutely necessary. Those who prefer irregularity and caprice, need not repeat on the left the ornament they have placed on the right.

Now let us consider the trimmings, where striking variations in the toilet become delicate shades.

The flounce is an ornament full of character. It adds width to the dress, richness to the garment, and to the play of light and shade those effects which indicate habits and which change their expression according as the flounce is plaited, gathered, ruched, quilled, slashed, with or without a heading.

Who does not feel the accent of propriety in a deep plaited flounce, which by its intentional regularity affirms a love of order, a well disciplined mind, because it resembles the draperies in which antique sculptors represented the priestesses, the vestals, and the young girls

who followed the processions of the Athenian gods—draperies whose regular and rigid folds told clearly that no hand had touched them.

If the flounce is gathered it is, we may say, rumpled in advance, and the quick play of its unfinished folds gives it a fanciful accent of freedom. If it is quilled it re-enters the list of regular ornaments, whether the quillings are large, when they are sometimes called organ pipes, or whether they are made smaller in order to form the heading of the flounce. The heading of the flounce is a pleasing accessory, which should never be deeper than one-fifth of the flounce. It is composed of a small plaiting, or of an erect quilling, which is held in place by a cross-band of satin or velvet, or it can be made of two quillings, one erect, the other falling, and separated either by a puffing, a lace insertion, or a braid; the latter is the quietest ornament.

When the skirt is trimmed with five or six flounces of equal width, there should be but one heading to them all, but the heading should be fuller and richer than usual. But if the flounces are alternate or graduated and consequently unequal in width, each flounce may have a heading, but in that case it seems better to leave out the cross-band or to make it of the same material, thus avoiding a new complication in the variations of colour, width, and plaits, which the inequality or the alternation of the flounces produces. Occasionally, instead of a heading to a flounce, it is surmounted by two or three rows of velvet, which render it more striking by opposing a flat, plain surface to the puckers of the material. The ruche is used to produce a contrary effect.

The ruche is a most delicate and feminine invention. Made in gauze, muslin, taffeta, or satin, it produces a charming succession of small folds arranged in a straight line. This forms a kind of methodical puckering, which unites the charm of intentional disorder to a symmetrical effect. Sometimes it is regularly plaited between two rows of velvet, or to make it richer the central line is replaced by a band of the material gathered the whole length; this forms a high ruche, a ruche marquise. It becomes an ornament by its confusion when it is composed of this disordered array of rumpled silky folds, and is then called a *chicorée* of taffeta. But one ornament is almost indispensable in the trimmings of a dress; this is the cross-band. The cross-band is a long strip of material, cut on the cross in order to give it more elasticity and strength as well as greater ease in folding. A material cut straight is stiff and ill-adapted for gathering. The rigid folds of conventual garments are always cut on the straight.

The cross-band changes the style of the texture owing to the different way in which the oblique threads absorb and reflect the light. If the material is striped the stripes become transverse, contrasting with the vertical lines of the dress. For instance, in the flounce of a plaid dress the cross-band transforms the squares into diamonds, thus producing a decided variation. The cross-band is then a band of material used sometimes to head a flounce, sometimes to contrast the colour of the skirt, tunic, or bodice, sometimes to trim the borders of the garment by repetition or gradation, for cross-bands can be repeated in the same width or graduated, or even

varied by the alternation of narrow and wide bands. In every form they are ornamental: whether cut from the same material as the costume they are made distinct from it by means of a decided border, or whether they produce a contrast by a difference of texture, which is then usually of velvet, satin, or crêpe de chine. Like the flounce or



MOBLOT.

the ruche, cross-bands can be used in different parts of the dress, and are particularly suitable for trimming the bodice and the basques.

From the morning wrapper, and the figaro jacket, both garments for home wear, which do not require a sash, to the polonaise, that falls a little below the knee, women

have many ways of imitating the pea-jackets and overcoats worn by men. In fact the paletôt itself is one of their most charming equipments, above all when it is loose or only half adjusted to the figure. This it is that constitutes the chief difference between the overall, the basquina, the cloak with a tippet, real or imitation, the Chinese paletôt with pagoda sleeves, the French guard paletôt with frogs and small satin knots, the dolman copied from the hussar uniforms, the moblot, an imitation of the greatcoats worn by the French *garde mobile*, the long open Louis XIV. frock coat, secured below the facings on the chest by a bow, and the frock coats closely buttoned, and short in front, recalling the female leaders of the Fronde rebellion.

Tightly fitting, these mantles are not becoming either to very thin or very stout women, because they attract the eye to those defects, which require concealment. In these cases it is wiser to choose light cloaks, which, by carefully arranged folds, veil while defining the figure, and thus hide its peculiarities. The looseness or tightness of a mantle determines its character, changing it from *négligé* to full dress. Sometimes to unite the two expressions the paletôt is cut behind as though the puff had forced it open, displaying the sash, which had been originally concealed. Sometimes the overall is raised and draped, so that by undoing it a train can be formed; sometimes the mantle represents at the same time an overall and a sash.

One detail must be noticed which proves that the laws of dress are positive—this is that broad-shouldered women obliged to wear tunics, jackets, or tight-fitting

paletôts, can decrease their size by a vertical band of velvet, gimp, or lace, which by dividing the width of the back diminishes its effect; for we must repeat it once



WATTEAU. SABOT SLEEVES; MARQUISE RUCHE.

more, all vertical lines heighten and elongate the object adorned, while all horizontal ones lower and enlarge it. This is why a tippet lowers the height of a tall woman.

while a sacque adds not exactly grace, but elegance to an ordinary figure. I say elegance rather than grace, for these terms should not be confounded in the language of the toilet. Elegance relates to the slenderness of the body, grace can be found in various proportions; a delicate woman may be graceful, even if she is short. Correggio in his rather small figures is full of grace; Parmigiano in his tall easy figures is a type of elegance.

But how true it is that the general style of the dress is a sign of the times and an indication of the morals of society! Formerly luxury was not incompatible with the wisdom of domestic economy, because it was composed of durable elements. The same apparel lasted during several generations. An Indian shawl was regarded as an heirloom; laces were bequeathed by will, and a young bride decked herself with pride in her grandmother's raiment. In this way the *esprit de famille* was preserved in the most personal of all feelings, viz., that of dress.

Now, with the exception of jewellery, articles of dress are no longer transferable. The shawl, which formerly lasted a lifetime, is replaced by a fashionable mantle, which scarcely looks well during one season. And this results from the desire for novelty, novelty being an easy method of displaying wealth if one is rich, of counterfeiting it if one is poor. In these days of ephemeral fortunes, dissipated as soon as made, all hasten to enjoy the present, and it is a question who can enjoy themselves most. In order to feign inexhaustible riches, garments which last are despised, dresses that wear out quickly are preferred, for the pleasure of renewing them is eagerly sought after. We have seen, and shall pro-

bably see again, young women who have found in their *corbeille de mariage* a cashmere shawl, exquisite in quality and delicious in colouring, no longer daring to wear it as a shawl, but puckering it at the waist to make it resemble the folds of a tunic, and fastening a rosette of black velvet in the centre. Others, out of the same regard for appearances, wear their shawls squarely folded, so that they form a horizontal line, which cuts the body in half, shortening it in defiance of all rules of beauty. And this is so true and so well understood by women individually, that when obliged to wear a cashmere mantle or a silk scarf, they know perfectly well how to avoid the horizontal effect by allowing the miniature shawl to fall carelessly, forming a cascade of changing folds, and consequently a curved line below the waist; and it must be admitted that the shawls of the present day regularly smother little women and are unbecoming to tall ones, because the convenience of this garment has been sacrificed to a desire to increase its beauty and the richness of its design. The cashmeres worn by our mothers had a large foundation, and this central part being fine and supple, so much so that it was boasted it could pass through a finger ring, adapted itself to the shoulders, defining the figure without enlarging it: now that the palms and other embroideries instead of bordering the foundation have invaded and nearly covered it, the shawl has become heavier and thicker all over, through the excessive ornaments that in their turn thicken and cumber the shoulders of the wearer. It is no longer possible for any but tall and thin women to put them on. Thus, to increase its richness, the shawl

is rendered less becoming. Ostentation has destroyed grace.

It is, however, a consolation for lovers of equality to see how well beauty can dispense with riches. A poor young girl wrapped in a simple printed barége shawl is often, perhaps unconsciously, perfectly graceful, whether the cold has forced her to fold her shawl closely round her youthful shoulders, or whether the season permits her to wear it half open, uncovering her throat.

There are certain textures which, charming in themselves, become doubly pleasing when they envelope a woman's form. The most perfect of them all is the crêpe de Chine, an incomparable tissue, possessing as much softness as strength; it is always supple and never creases. Before it is dyed, its folds caress the eye like the ripples in a bath of milk, and if coloured with flowers or fantastic birds, its tints shine, in relief, like a casket of jewels. But, however rich the material used,—and here the material itself is the production of human industry,—it must not be forgotten that, for women the supreme art of dress consists in never confusing the means with the end—that is, so to be dressed that the attention of the spectator, attracted by the toilet, may be drawn to the woman, and thus the costume only serve to increase the admiration for the wearer. One often hears the remark, “We saw some pretty dresses in our walk to-day.” Well, if the clever workwomen had been a little more skilful, we should have heard, “We saw some pretty women in our walk to-day.”

XV.

IN SPITE OF THE INNUMERABLE VARIATIONS WHICH THE ART OF DRESS ADMITS, IT IS SUBJECT, LIKE ALL OTHER ARTS, TO THE THREE INVARIABLE RULES OF BEAUTY—ORDER, PROPORTION, AND HARMONY.

THE human body, or to speak artistically, the human figure, being at once a model of order, an example of proportion, and a type of harmony, it is natural that these three qualities should distinguish a man's dress, and still more a woman's dress, for her mission in life is the desire to please, and the gift of pleasing. Order is manifested by the similitude and correspondence which exists between duplicate organs and the members symmetrically arranged to the right and left of the central line. And since the symmetry of the human body, disturbed by movement, is regained in repose, the order in a woman's toilet results from the symmetrical arrangement of correspondent parts, and above all of the ornaments that balance, such as earrings; and of the place in the axis of the head-dress or in the central line of the figure, occupied by jewels, bunches of flowers, bouquets, knots of ribbon in the hair, the medallions on a necklet, the bows of the sash, the lace ruffles, the regular braiding of the paletôt, the rows of buttons and the graduated succession of frogs, cross-bands of taffeta, or jet ornaments.

A toilet can, no doubt, be pretty with some intentional defects of symmetry; for instance, an aigrette, a feather, or a rose placed on one side of the hair, or a large plait on one hip, held by a buckle or a knot of ribbon; but it is certain that an ornament placed on one

side of the vertical axis and not repeated on the other, gives a fanciful air to the dress, which duplication would have avoided. Slight irregularities are sometimes piquant, charming and attractive; but to merit its title, beauty requires at least a portion of that equilibrium which is one of the aspects of order, and an equivalent of symmetry.

This is not all: the human body, in spite of the innumerable differences in individuals, has typical proportions.

A woman's average height is one twenty-second part smaller than that of a man. Her face is one-tenth shorter, and since the space between the eyes remains the same, the oval of her face is rounder. The head measured in length is rather less than one-seventh of the entire height of the body. The shoulders are smaller by one-thirtieth, and the ribs by one-eleventh. The result is that the bust forms, with the socket of the neck, an equilateral triangle.

These are the general proportions of a woman, and they should be respected in her dress. However, since some slight deviations exist in all individuals, which cause them to differ more or less from the perfect type, it becomes necessary in the adornment of human beings to redeem the irregularities which disfigure them, and to bring into prominence the harmonious relation of individual proportions.

Every day we see women loading their heads with immoderate chignons, fabrics which, by their size, render the head one-fifth of the whole height.

It is easy to increase the height of a woman's head without spoiling her natural proportions. It is only

necessary to define distinctly her bonnet or head-dress, so that the whole person seems raised by nearly one-seventh; for if the length of a woman's head is rather more than one seventh of the length of her body, it can be one eighth without interfering with the proportions: for this constitutes slenderness in either sex. Thus a head-dress, which increases a woman's height by a head, only gives elegance to the profile, provided, once more, that the head and the head-dress do not form one undivided mass, appearing to the eye two-eighths or one quarter of the entire figure. This happens when women attempting to copy postilions' wigs, dress themselves out with enormous chignons, instead of wearing light curls falling on the neck but not concealing it.

One day, when the caprices and follies of fashion were being discussed before us, a lady said eagerly, "But, after all, whatever is fashionable is never ridiculous." These words, spoken in jest, contain a great deal of truth. In a country like France, a country which fashion has made her native home, there is always sufficient intelligence to restrain extravagance, and taste to correct it. If fashion is eccentric, all the professors of dress seem to unite to redeem and diminish its mistakes. For instance, when large chignons were introduced, women, in order to avoid being overweighted by them, restored the high heels to their shoes, and thus regaining their seeming loss of stature, they re-established the proportions which the enormous head-dress had disturbed.

In the human body, which is almost monochromatic, the proportion of the members one with another, and their accordance with one common measure, are an image of

order, an element of harmony; but in the body dressed and adorned by its clothing, it is necessary to join the harmony of texture and colour to that of lines and masses.

But in the first place harmony and character agree. Does not harmonizing a work consist in reducing the various parts into one uniform whole? And in dress, where beauty is always relative and individual, unity can only result from character, which under penalty of extinction is essentially *one*. How is it possible to express a character without being guided by a pre-conceived idea, a ruling sentiment? There is then a moral harmony to be established at the same time as an optical one. For this reason women have invented what they appropriately term costumes, that is, a complete toilet, combined at first in one colour, or in two bordering shades; for instance, olive green and pale green, fawn and brown, violet and mauve, or else formed of two contrasting and striking colours, like capucine and turquoise, sulphur and garnet, gold and violet; or again, of two entirely different colours, such as pearl-grey and China rose. These two principal shades should constitute the harmony of female dress, either by repetition, contrast, or consonance, or by all these at the same time.

Let us imagine, then, a toilet of one shade: the dress is of iron-grey taffeta. If the tunic is of the same and the bonnet matches, the harmony is defined by the uniformity. And in order to prevent unity from becoming monotony, it is sufficient to change the texture of the tunic, making it of *crêpe de Chine* or cashmere. The colour, although practically the same, would not on the



crêpe de Chine or the cashmere be absolutely identical in tint with the taffeta.

But if the upper skirt is of a different shade from the under one, though bordering upon it, harmony is easily established through consonance, provided that each of the shades is used with the other. The under skirt being violet, and the upper mauve, the latter can be relieved at the sides by a fringed violet bow, the fringe being of violet to match the under skirt, but separated from the bow by mauve ends. The mauve bodice, which with the second skirt forms a tunic, should have violet basques, with fringes to match. On these basques should be placed a mauve quilling, and on the quilling, at the waist, a violet bow with fringe should be worn. In this costume, properly called a costume *camaïeu*, each shade is distinct and each is echoed in the dress.

Now, if the two colours are in contrast, like pale blue and straw-colour—a combination produced in nature by the contrast of the sky against a field of ripe corn—if the blue skirt is ornamented with a deep plaited ruche, the sleeves of the straw-coloured tunic should have small blue plaitings. A scarf of black lace trimmed with blue ribbons, and attached at the waist by a large blue silk bow, would agreeably soften the contrast and form a charming accessory to the dress. If the hat were made of straw or crinoline, it would be necessary to recall the tint of the skirt by a blue feather, a blue gauze scarf, or a bunch of forget-me-nots. But the echo of colour is not the only means of harmonizing the different parts of a dress; it can be established, or rather it must be established, by the use of the same trimmings. If the under



skirt has an indented flounce edged with velvet, the upper skirt should also be indented and edged with velvet, and the same ornaments should be repeated in miniature on the basques of the bodice. It is the same with plaits, quillings, cross-bands, cordings, *ruches*, and also what are called "fancy trimmings," which cannot be used on the skirt or tunic, without re-appearing in narrow widths on the bodice and sleeves.

If the upper skirt has a large facing, a tasteful woman would not neglect to repeat this facing on the basques and the cape, if she wore one, and even the cuffs of her sleeves would have the same ornaments. When hand embroideries are the fashion, or the season of furs has arrived, she is careful to trim her jacket with the same fur or braid that are on the dress, and even to put some on the sleeves. In this way the style of the dress is defined, and thus harmonizing a toilet only consists in accentuating its character.

Let us now pause to observe the admirable relationship which exists between all the arts—how the painter colouring his picture, the musician writing his score, obey the same laws as the artist who decorates the human form. Listen to a master's symphony, you hear the principal air of one part, passing through various phases, quicker or slower according to the different rhythms, and, if a second air is formed, it is heard developing itself in a different part of the orchestra at the same time as the first, until the two ideas, apparently strangers to one another, unite and lose themselves in a superior melody which completes the meaning of the work.

It is the same with a woman's dress. It is neither

graceful nor noble, magnificent nor simple, coquettish nor severe, before variety has been subjected to harmony—that is, to the unity of a definite style.

If the dress is intended to be dignified, the least frivolity in the trimmings would render it ridiculous. Its dignity may be compromised by merely wearing a hat or a bonnet without strings, instead of a close bonnet with them, or by the flowers, instead of blooming in the centre of the head-dress, being worn on one side, like the hats of the braggadocios of former days. Everything that interrupts uniformity, that resembles manly habits or clothes, above all military uniforms, or that reminds us ironically of rustic uncouthness, and the careless negligence of the masses, detracts from a dignified costume. On the other hand, grace that provokes attention, the desire to attract and to triumph, will not neglect any of those accessories which imprint themselves on the eye and on the memory ; and the harmony of a designedly piquant costume will consist in an assortment of intentional variations, in which we shall meet with contrasting colours, braidings imitating the decorations of hunting-coats or hussar jackets, postilion basques, and the double facings of a girondin bodice, with its stripes, its false pockets, its buttons, frogs, open cuffs and steel buckles. Whilst a woman, who wishes to be respected, avoids striking contrasts and contents herself with the harmonies of a minor fashion, the woman who courts observation relies on the effects of opposition, the parade of colours, and the style of the trimmings. She defies symmetry, puckers the flounces of her dress in the same way that she puckers her lips and her eyebrows ; she redoubles the fanciful changes in her attire, and completes

it by placing a flower or a tuft of feathers on one side of a coquettish hat and in raising her tunic in fantastic folds.

But we must not be deceived by appearances: the dignity of dress, its veiled luxuriousness, the severity of the uniform or *camaïeu* style are sometimes an excess of refinement dictated by the most perfect coquetry. Women also can use masked batteries.

But that harmony is a necessity of dress is so hackneyed a truth that the reader may think a simple allusion to it would have been sufficient. Yet no; this truth, if hackneyed, is not universal, for each day we meet charming persons who do not know it, or at any rate act as though they were ignorant of it. Our promenades, our streets, our drawing-rooms, our theatres are crowded with women whose attire is discordant. This one, dressed entirely in black, has placed a rose in her bonnet, which, by its isolation, makes a spot in her costume, just as in a picture, a solitary light produces the effect of a hole. That one, instead of mixing harmonious colours—for instance, blue and green, or complementary colours, which must always be used in unequal proportions, like green and red, violet and yellow—has put incongruous colours side by side, reddish browns next to fresh tints, pink next to garnet, fiery red to mauve, blue to brown. We have seen a clever woman wearing at home a scarlet waistcoat over a petticoat of the shade called *groseille des Alpes*: the combination was an optical scandal. There is nothing more painful to the eye than badly contrasted colours, that is, the use of colours in defiance of the law of complementary shades.* But it is not only the eye

* The theory of complementary colours has been clearly explained

that is interested in the assortment of colour, and the harmonies or discords of the toilet; sentiment cannot be omitted in its consideration, and, as a clever woman once said, "It is still possible to dream in a sky-blue bonnet, but it is absolutely forbidden to weep in a pink one."

XVI.

TO THE HARMONY OF THE TOILET, ALL THE SECONDARY OR ACCESSORY DETAILS SHOULD CONTRIBUTE, SUCH AS SHOES, GLOVES, THE FAN, THE PARASOL, AND THE ADDITIONAL AND DETACHED ORNAMENTS, FRINGES, FEATHERS, AND LACES.

HOWEVER long the skirt or train of a dress may be, the shoes will sometimes be visible. We must, then, consider what constitutes a woman's being well and suitably shod, for the effect of a toilet is spoilt if the shoes are not in keeping. But with regard to the female foot, a prejudice exists against which we must now protest. Fashionable women wish, like the Chinese, to possess imperceptible feet, some of them, perhaps, in order to produce the impression that they are unable to walk and were born to be carried. But Nature, who is never deceived in the generic proportions of the human race, maintains these proportions, and, in spite of all our vanity, she will not allow the human body to rest upon a base incapable of supporting it.

According to Albert Dürer's measurements, a woman's foot is to her height in the proportion of 14 to 100, or as 7 to 50; that is to say, it is one-seventh minus a fraction which it is allowable to ignore. We

in the *Grammaire des Arts du Dessin*, to which this book forms a continuation.

may then take as the measure of a woman's foot one-seventh part of her height, that is, the relation of 7 to 49.* Below this proportion, save the fraction we have mentioned, there can be neither charm nor gracefulness, because both are inseparable from convenience, which, in this case, can only result from perfection. But admitting the fancy of women for small feet—a fancy adopted by them because coarse rough natures usually have large heavy extremities—it is only necessary to press the foot a little forward in order to diminish its apparent size and at the same time to increase the woman's height. A dancer walking on the tips of her toes gives herself a momentary grace from the suppression of her feet, and an elegant woman by raising herself upon high heels shortens her feet, because the sole of the foot forms with the leg a very open angle instead of a right angle.

Another method of diminishing the natural importance of the foot, and of giving it greater delicacy of appearance, is by placing a large ornament upon the instep; for instance, the satin and lace bows, the most coquettish trait in the Louis XIII. and the Louis XIV. shoes. But the high heels, if they have the advantage of accentuating the arch of the instep, have the inconvenience of distorting a woman's walk, forcing her to beat time with her steps, like a soldier in the ranks.

We have had occasion to notice that women excel in

* This relative measure is the same as Shadow has adopted as normal in his work on proportion, called *Polyclète*. Given 66 inches (1^m.78) as the average height of a man, the average height of a woman is 63 inches (1^m.70), and her foot is 9 inches long—9 being precisely one-seventh of 63.

making use in their costumes of all that recalls masculine habiliments. They can charm us as much in strong boots as in satin shoes. They have the secret of giving an indescribably mischievous and decided expression to clumped shagreen shooting boots, laced in front and double soled, whenever they can find a pretext for wearing them—a mountain excursion where sharp stones may be met with or a walk through the brambles of a wood. A morning walk in the country is sufficient excuse for the adoption of wooden shoes (*sabots*), which, defying the dew and the mud of clay soils, offer a striking contrast to the delicacy of the wearers' feet. In towns, boots of polished kid, or, better still, of deer-skin are worn, which fit like a pair of gloves, and which, for full dress, are changed for open shoes with Louis XV. heels and bows.

It is, perhaps, almost superfluous to make another observation, namely, that evening shoes should always match the dresses they are worn with, in the same way that slippers should match the dressing-gown. Feminine exquisites usually reserve a piece of the silk of which their dress is composed and have their ball-room shoes made of it.

And this rule applies to all descriptions of boots. Cloth boots should be of the same shade as the petticoat, and when the dress is in two colours the shoe, if it is of stuff, should recall the prevailing tint, in order to avoid attracting attention, or it should repeat the colour of the trimmings, and thus accentuate the harmony. Although certain boots, such as polished or bronzed kid, suit all costumes, there are some which should match the dress. A black boot would not look well with a grey silk, for it

would be a noticeable spot. A maize shoe relieved by a bow of pale blue *poult-de-soie* would harmonize perfectly with a stylish toilet in these two colours. A bronze boot is well adapted to grey and brown costumes. Sometimes the shoes match through the trimmings of lace or blonde being similar to the flounces of the dress or the ornaments on the tunic. To conclude, it is the shoes that complete the character of the dress, and in bringing back into fashion the shoes worn under Louis XV., which rest instead of fatiguing the wearer, women have acquired a new resource, which is the more appreciated because it allows them to elevate their head-dresses, and thus add to their natural grace that proportionate slenderness which is indispensable to elegance.

The Gloves.—It was formerly said that for a glove to be good three kingdoms should have contributed towards its manufacture: Spain to prepare the kid, France to cut it, and England to sew it. Three nations for one glove! How can we avoid attaching importance to this portion of feminine attire? And who will reproach us for devoting at least one page to its consideration?

Fashion has not much influence over gloves. She always insists that for women they should be longer than the hand, in order that they may not form an abrupt line below the wrist; they must be glazed or dull, according to the time when they are to be worn, and good taste, more unchangeable than fashion, advises women never to wear them too tight-fitting, for tight gloves give a swollen look to both hands and fingers. Just as a woman's *embonpoint* is most striking in a very close-fitting bodice,

which has no folds, and which, by compressing the figure displays its fulness, causing it to rebel against the pressure and rebound ; so however slightly plump the hands may be they revolt against tight gloves, and in spite of the elasticity of the lamb's skin the suppleness of their articulation is lost.

A woman who does not neglect details in her efforts to please should consult on this as on all other points, the great masters of portrait painting, Rubens, Vandyck, Velasquez, Reynolds, Lawrence, Gérard, Ingres. She would perceive that the gloves worn by the women they painted, all distinguished for their beauty or for their charming manners, always formed light creases, and never looked tight or narrow. It is evident that the artists feared that imprisoning the hands would give them the effect of those wooden hands used by glovers for sign boards.

These beautiful female portraits, as the artists have represented them, show us that they intentionally sacrificed the lights in the hand to those of the face, by carefully softening the shade of the gloves with a light glazing. The Swedish gloves are worn with the same idea, in *écru*, cinnamon or *amadou*, which look so well with town costumes.

If the gloves are glazed and of a brilliant yellow, which is so closely related to pure white, they have the double disadvantage of forming a luminous spot which at once attracts the eye, and seems to enlarge the hand, because all forms appear to increase in size when they are very light or very striking, whilst darker tints diminish the apparent size and lessen the objects they cover. A

quiet or neutral coloured glove reduces the hand. But when a dress is intended for evening wear, for a concert, a reception, or a ball, it would be inappropriate to wear dark gloves, and in this case the pale colour of the gloved hand should be lost in the bright tints of the silks, gauzes, or laces. Young men who have substituted pale lavender for straw-coloured gloves, have perhaps unconsciously followed this rule, for the latter are too great a contrast against their black clothes. They have acted like artists.

Fringes and Feathers.—In clothes as in painting, there are artists who aim at the precision of detail and expression, which belong to certain carefully designed works. Others prefer the softness which results from vague outlines, the design overflowing and merging its edges. It is this class that first formed the idea of unravelling the web of a texture, so that it ended in light changeable divisions which have no outlines. From this resulted fringes. When they are manufactured in the material itself, the fringes are prettier, because they are more natural, and they respond better to the idea of the inventor.

Fringes made with wool, thread, twisted cotton, silk ferret or silk cord are not so graceful, because they are fastened to a heading which forms a hard line, just where it was intended to soften or indeed avoid it. Ball fringes, tassel fringes, and even net fringes seem more suitable for trimming furniture, carriages, tapestry or tablecloths. If used for novelties, that is, for trimming feminine garments, they are diverted from their original use, which was to give as a softening effect to certain pieces

of material, a silky cloud or a stiff row of cotton threads. In the same way, if large beads or balls are mixed with fringe the effect that should be obtained is destroyed by their irregularity, and the distorted ornament loses its character. Feather fringes, on the contrary, are perfectly appropriate in diminishing the hardness of outlines. They look extremely well with silk, and should match the colour of the dress. A cloth garment, if it is braided, a dolman for instance, which is trimmed with frogs, may be very prettily edged with curled feathers, which by their softness and cloudy appearance correct the harshness of the gimp.

On the other hand, gimp and braids in general have been invented to relieve the uniformity of plain materials, above all, of those with dull surfaces. This is why braiding looks so well on cloth, which is enlivened by fancy designs, and why a high velvet bodice is so successfully relieved and enhanced by those twisted fringes, the plaited braids, the *fourragères*, which on the shoulders of a sprightly woman recall the military epaulets of an aide-de-camp.

The Fan.—Nothing that a woman uses, in the great art of pleasing, can be considered simple. Does any one doubt this fact? No less than fifteen or twenty persons are employed in making a fan. First, there are the workmen who make the frames technically called the *bois*, that is, the pieces of wood, mother-of-pearl, bone, or ivory, called blades, which form the interior of the fan, and the two longer and stronger blades which under the name of *panaches* protect the leaf of the fan, when it is closed.

The blades, when cut, are given to the moulder, who

files them into the desired shape, then to the polisher, then to the carver. Next follow the engraver, who engraves them, the chaser, who carves them in open work, the gilder, who gilds them, and the workman who fastens on the spangles of oxidised silver, of steel, gold, or copper. And all this does not complete the handle of the fan, for the blades and the *panaches* have still to be united by means of a metal pin, which holds them together and is called the rivet. In the mean time a sheet of vellum, lamb's skin, silk, or crape has been prepared, on which a subject has been painted in water colours, in order to be lithographed or engraved, and which serves as a model for colouring the proofs. Sometimes celebrated artists do not disdain to decorate handsome fans, painting gallant figures, groups, landscapes, small medallions which, as they are not multiplied by engraving, make the fan thus ornamented an unique and costly specimen. There now only remains the fixing of this painted leaf on the frame: to do this the blades are elongated by the introduction of thin supple slips of wood or cardboard which support the coloured paper or silk, which has previously been carefully folded; the edges are then gilt, and the blades and *panaches* are embellished, by incrusting them with reliefs in colour or with tiny mirrors. Finally the overseer puts the last touches to the work, adding the tassels, the tufts of marabout, etc., and when this formidable weapon of coquetry is completed it is enclosed in a case, like a well tempered blade in its sheath.

Regardless of the climate, the fan is chiefly an accessory of the toilet, affording an excuse for graceful move-

ments under the pretext of agitating the air to refresh it. This flexible curtain, in turn discloses all that is apparently hidden, conceals all that is apparently exposed. In the time of Louis XV., Mdme. de Staël wrote, "What graces does not a fan place at a woman's disposal if she only knows how to use it properly! It waves, it



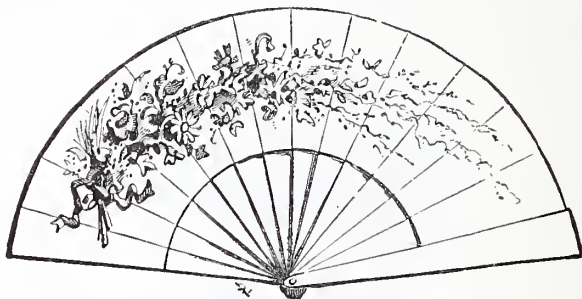
HAND SCREEN.

flutters, it closes, it expands, it is raised or lowered according to circumstances. Oh! I will wager that in all the paraphernalia of the loveliest and best dressed woman in the world, there is no ornament with which she can produce so great an effect."

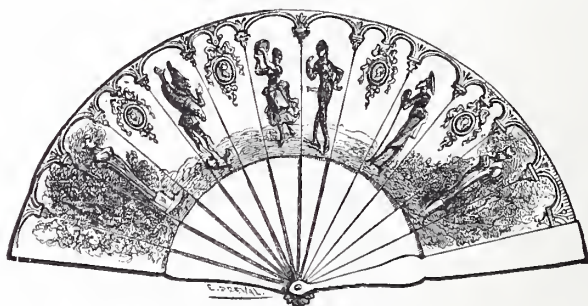
For a Spaniard, all the intrigues of love, all the manoeuvres of flirtation, are hidden in the folds of her fan. The shy audacity of her looks, her venturous words, her

hazardous avowals, half uttered, half dying on the lips, all are hidden by the fan, which appears to forbid while it encourages, to intercept whilst it conveys.

But what style of ornament is most suitable for a fan? Can well-known pictures, scenes from comedies, or pas-



DIFFUSED ORNAMENT.



RADIATING DECORATION.

torals, be painted on them? Nothing is more appropriate if the fan is not folded, if it is a hand-screen. But if otherwise, what would be the use of depicting figures engaged in action of any kind, when they could only be seen separated, cut, and mutilated by the radiating folds of the vellum or silk on which they are painted; although, if the artist had arranged his figures so that each one

should occupy an oblique division of the fan, they could be placed face to face in couples, and would at least remain entire. A Watteau harlequin kissing his hand to a Columbine, a Leander quarrelling with Isabelle, could be placed on blades which in refolding would reunite the lovers and reconcile the disputants. But to develop a graceful subject on a series of projecting and retreating angles, all more or less acute, would be a waste of labour. Is it not better to use in these cases a diffused or a radiating ornament? Is it not better to scatter over the fan a charmingly disordered arrangement of pictures and colours, or even to place isolated subjects between the folds, in order that elegant women, in manipulating their fans, may have twenty opportunities of showing in each fancy group the artist's talent, and, at the same time, of displaying some special charm of their own—a pretty hand, a well turned arm, or beautiful eyes?

The sunshade is another weapon of coquetry. You believe that it was invented to shield the complexion from the sun? No doubt this is true, but how many resources has this necessity of shading their faces furnished women with, and how little they would think of the sun if it did not give them this pretext of defending themselves from its rays? In the work of art, which we call a woman's toilet, the sunshade plays the part of chiaroscuro. It produces the charming effect that Rubens has imitated in his celebrated picture called "*Chapeau de Paille*," which consists in effacing the shadows of the face, in blending them with the light, thus merging the whole in luminous half tints.

But these beautiful shadows result from the sunshade

being of a pale colour, for instance of maize silk, if the under skirt is of that shade and material, for the sunshade must match the dress. If the skirt is in violet or mauve silk, the sunshade should be lined with violet or mauve.



SUNSHADE.

But there is a risk of the reflections of this lining changing the complexion.

Let us here recall the laws of complementary colours. By throwing a violet shade over the face, the skin becomes colourless and dull, because the flesh tints, always more or less yellowish, destroyed by the violet, are reduced to a neutral tint of pale grey, whilst a

parasol lined with rose de chine, or carnation coloured silk, sheds a youthful and animated colour over the face. But how is it possible that the parasol and the dress should match when the reflection of the lining may spoil the complexion ? The parasol can be made to harmonize with the dress by means of a light flounce, or by a small fringe of the same colour as the dress or its trimmings. A pretty woman will never sacrifice her beauty, even to the rules of optical harmony.

The sunshade, in the play of colours, resembles a varnish, in the play of light it resembles a blind.

LACE.

The same may be said of a woman's dress, as is said of nature, that she excels in details, *maxime miranda in minimis*. We must not, then, be astonished at the important part played by lace in her attire ; and, in fact, how many things here require consideration, how many delicate precautions must be taken in the fabrication of an ornament which is at once so strong and so light, so transparent and so firm !

It would be useless to write much about lace if we still retained the habits of our ancestors, for formerly every woman was a connoisseur in stitches. It was not the "cloistered nuns" alone who undertook the task of spinning, sewing, and embroidering to escape the ennui of the convent, and to prevent their thoughts from wandering to the outer world.

Needlework occupied a large portion of women's time, even of those of high birth and station. This sedentary

employment of the hours of daylight, whilst exercising the delicacy of their hands and taste, kept them at home, habituating and attaching them to a secluded life, so that even their thoughts could not stray far away. But the isolation of the larger mansions, and the bad state of the roads, rendered travelling difficult, and confined dames and maidens to their houses, and even princesses to their palaces. Queens set the example. Isabella in Spain, Catherine de Medicis in France, Catherine of Arragon in England, without naming Mary Stuart, who found thread and silk companions in her captivity, were clever and diligent workwomen, who themselves taught the art of needlework to the young maidens of their courts. It is probable that lace was invented in one of these work-rooms, where great ladies prepared the triumphs of their coquetry and elegance.

There was but a slight step from the open embroidery to guipure, which was the first lace; and since the oldest guipures and earliest engraved patterns came to us from Venice, there is reason to believe that lace was an Italian invention. Those who attribute a much greater antiquity, and an Oriental origin, to this style of work, have not remembered that if the early Eastern races, who are the first mentioned in the history of the world, had manufactured lace several centuries before it was known in Europe, it would be strange if they had ceased to make it from the moment they communicated their secret to us; especially as these people have, since the commencement of history, faithfully retained their ideas, their costumes, their habits, and their industrial arts.

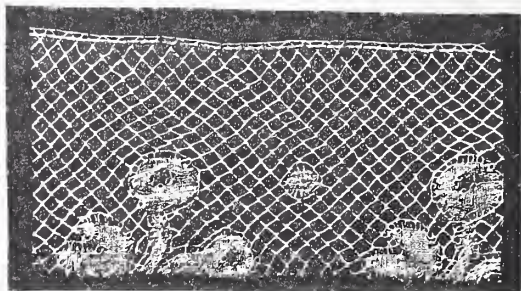
Be this as it may, without dwelling on a question which is not precisely within our range, we have now to consider lace as a decorative object.

The essential distinction between embroidery and lace, consists in the former being worked upon a pre-existent foundation, whilst the latter is manufactured at the same time as its foundation, and requires no ground to work upon.

By lace is understood a fabric made with a needle or with bobbins on a regular foundation, called net-work or trellis (*réseau ou treille*), and all work of the same style, where the design is in relief on an irregular foundation, is called guipure. Thus it is in the foundation that the chief difference between guipure and lace exists. The one is intended to stand out from a network from which it is inseparable; the other is invented and executed independently of the ground. The workwoman, having finished her work, her *fleur*, unites the details by means of unequal lines, called *brides* or sometimes *barrettes*. The *bride* in needle-lace is composed of two or three twisted threads, and, in spite of its apparent frailty, it forms a strong fastening. In pillow guipure, the *bride* is a plait of four threads, united by a twisted or button-holed stitch.

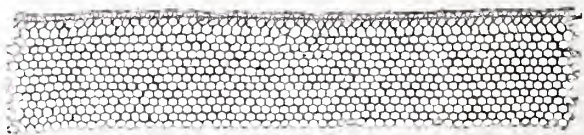
The appearance of a piece of lace, its softness, its fullness, its elegance, are connected with innumerable details, which require to be thoroughly understood, in order to comprehend the charming and important effects resulting from the use of this trifling article. These details are the foundation, the pattern, the stitch, the *toilé*, the *grillé*, the close work (*mat*), the open work (*jours*), the edge or footing, and the pearl.

The foundation, which is also called *réseau*, is a regular network of threads, which form in crossing sometimes square or diamond-shaped meshes, like the Valenciennes, sometimes six-sided meshes, like those used in point d'Alençon. Sometimes the sides of the



RÉSEAU WITH SQUARE MESHES, USED IN VALENCIENNES LACE.

hexagon are strengthened by twisting the thread, or by button-holing each mesh when the lace is of needle-work, and this also gives strength to the *réseau*, which is then called *fond de bride*. When this is the case, the

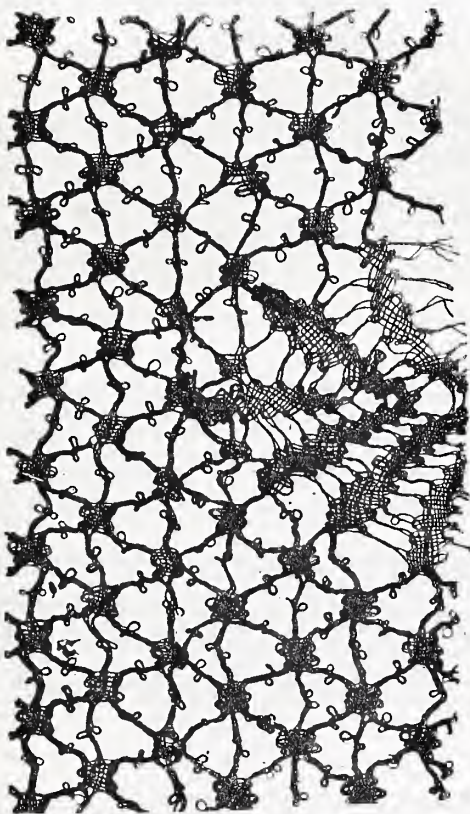


RÉSEAU WITH HEXAGON MESHES, ALSO CALLED ROUND MESHES.

threads resemble the twisted bars, which form the *brides* in guipure.

But as the engraver, wishing to make his shades on the copper lighter or deeper, crosses the lines in various directions, leaving the white paper visible through them, so the lace-worker varies her *réseau*, either by crossing

three threads so as to form a succession of hexagons separated by small triangles, or by forming rather large meshes, each surrounded by a small lattice work. This latter style, which is costly and beautiful, is used in

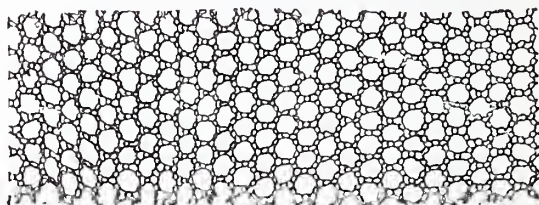


GUIPURE FOUNDATION IN BARRETTES.

the lace called *à la Vierge*, which is manufactured at Dieppe; it is usually called *fond de cinq trous*, or five-holed netting, and in Auvergne is known as *mariage*. The other is the *point de Paris*, or *fond chant*, which

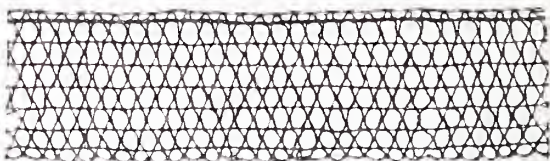
doubtless derives its name from an abbreviation of Chantilly, where this style of lace was first made.

What delicate inventions simply to embellish a pretty woman! What grace is displayed in this fabric only made to please us! But we have but just reached the commencement of the combinations required. On the *réseau*,



FOUNDATION OF FIVE HOLES, ALSO CALLED MARIAGE.

the pattern, technically called the *fleur*, is to be worked. This is the ornament which is designed on paper, and reproduced on parchment. The outlines are first traced in pin pricks, then in a coarse strong cotton, which inter-



FOND CHANT.

laces itself in the finer threads of the *réseau*. The pattern will be more or less in relief, according to the coarseness of the thread used in the outlines, whether it is a thick flat *cordonnet* like the Malines lace, or whether no other edging is employed than a light border of the *réseau*, like that seen in the old Brussels point.

The *fleur* once traced, I should say once completed in

the exterior lines, how is it to be filled in? By linen stitch, by trellis work, or by heavy embroidery. The linen stitch or *toilé* is a close texture, in which the threads cross at right angles, in the same way as in a piece of linen, and they produce a plain surface. The *grillé* or trellis-work is made by the threads being a little more apart, crossing diagonally and forming a trellis of diamonds of different sizes. The pieces where the needle or bobbin has repassed to thicken them constitute the *mat* or heavy embroidery.

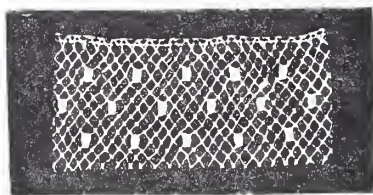
Thus in this fairy-like architecture, in which the courses of stone are, as it were, linen or silk threads, the solid masonry is represented by the *toilé* and the *mat*; the apertures half by the *grillé*, and half by the openings called *jours*—but the name *jours* is only used when the openings are crossed by threads artistically arranged to intercept a part of the light. When there are no cross threads, the space left is only an open hole.

However slightly we may be acquainted with the art of engraving or of drawing in chalks, we can easily imagine what richness, what variety, what colouring—I say it advisedly—what colouring can be given to lace by the mixture of the *grillé* with the *mat*, of the *jours* with the *toilé*, by the transitions between the plain and the spotted, by the accentuation of the outlines, and finally by the great contrast formed by this fanciful embroidery, and its light and regular foundation of netting, which forms a contrast and a transition, a softening effect, and a relief.

This charming work becomes doubly piquant if the *réseau* is spotted with *points d'esprit*—that is, with small round knots in relief, about the size of a grain of millet

seed, placed in squares, in the same way as on tulle veils or the small flat squares on Lille and d'Arras lace.

This is not all: lace being usually sewn or basted on to a dress to form an edging or a flounce requires a footing, technically called an *engrelure*: this consists of a kind of selvage which allows the lace to be used



POINT D'ESPRIT.

for different purposes, to be taken off one dress and sewn on to another without interfering with or spoiling the pattern.

But some pieces do not require more than a *pied*. By this name is designated the coarse thread to which the lace is attached; it resembles an abridgment of the *engrelure*. Instead of being at the lower edge of the lace it finishes the top of it. There is an upper and lower edging to all lace that is not circular. The bottom one ends with a pearl (*picot*), a tiny loop of thread not larger than a pin's point.

What minuteness in the grace of this almost imperceptible ornament! Suppress it, and there would remain a harsh cold line; the lace would be distinct from the silk or velvet, instead of blending with it by a faint broken outline.

These delicate fabrications, which are only made to

please the eye, these ingenious methods of reproducing a design by means of interwoven threads passing through one another, are common to all laces—to all *passemens*, as they were formerly called: all have the *mats*, the *jours*, the open spaces (*vides*), the *pied*, and the *picot*—for the expressions *toilé* and *grillé* are only employed in pillow-lace—but each has its distinctive style, which results chiefly from the choice of the pattern and from the stitches used in making it.

We will first consider the pattern.

The Pattern in lace.—There is one rule of good taste to be remembered in designs for lace: this is never to choose distinct objects, such as vases, baskets, crowns, hearts, or turkeys' tails. The more faithfully such objects could be represented, the more unsuitable they would be. The idea of weight, which connects itself with a vase, a crown, or a basket, is in direct opposition to the lightness of the fabric. And besides this, a naturally convex object must be out of place when copied on a transparent texture, where the substance is intrinsically frail. If the subject designed is not to be recognised, it is useless to draw it correctly, and if it is to be distinguished at the first glance, it cannot fail to be displeasing to the eye, if it is naturally spheroid or cubical.

In Queen Charlotte's time, the English caused a piece of lace in *point d'Angleterre* to be made and presented to her, the design of which had reference to the destruction of the invincible Armada by Elizabeth's fleet. Men of war bending before the wind, dolphins as large as the ships, a fort as small as the dolphins, groups of weapons and of flags, were alter-

nately displayed on a foundation of hexagon *brides*, and a *réseau* of wide square meshes dotted with stars. Is it possible to imagine a Queen bearing on her shoulders the image of a frigate in distress, or on her throat dolphins sporting near a fort! And when ornaments of this kind attract the spectator's eye, how can he divert his attention to the wearer?

In our time the desire or rather the passion for novelty has induced even the most skilful and celebrated lace manufacturers to introduce the effect of shadows and of modelled designs into their lace patterns. These innovations, which are used in the latest specimens of the Chantilly lace made at Bayeux, are looked upon and boasted of as improvements; they consist in heightening the design by the effects of chiaroscuro, by representing for instance foreshortened flowers, a rosebud half hidden behind a leaf, a convolvulus obliquely opening its bell—in a word, by simulating various designs by means of graduated shades and deep veinings. This much vaunted progress appears to us an unfortunate novelty, capable of entirely destroying the character of lace, for in this as in most other decorative arts, literal imitation and perspective are the elements of corrupted taste.

It is true that the Venetians used ornaments in high relief on their guipures and in knotted stitches called *punto a gropo*; but the shadows in these reliefs were produced by the incidence of the *jours*. At each movement of the wearer, the shadows changed from dark to light, from light to dark. There is no attempt at modelling; no idea of copying guided the designer; and it is probable that if he had thought of imitating anything

exactly he would have been deterred from doing so by the knowledge that a fixed object, rendered in needle-work or by the aid of bobbins, would be continually disturbed by the variations in the *jours*, which would fall, now from right to left, now from left to right, according to the wearer's movements in either direction.

If a cup, basket, bell, or any other cylindrical or oval object is reproduced in shaded tints, the convexity of the form is broken by the gathers of the lace, the portions that should be prominent will recede, and instead of a clearly defined drawing, a precise copy, the result will be an inverted perspective. And this modelled image on lace is contrary to all sentiment of suitability, even when the lace is without movement, as it would be if made into an altar cloth, fastened round a pulpit, or used to decorate furniture, because then the objects would each be conspicuously detailed instead of forming a harmonious, soft, piquant, and graceful *ensemble*. But what we say here regarding the pattern of the ornament, is equally applicable to the symmetry of the details, with this difference, that symmetry is appropriate to lace when it is to be seen without folds—for a bed coverlet or a toilet-table decoration over glazed lining, in which case, geometrical or radiating figures would, when it is to be used, be quite suitable, either placed alternately, or simply repeated in squares; but if the lace is to be adapted to a dress, if it is to move with the wearer and to form intentional or accidental folds, symmetry is useless—its only advantage is to entice customers, when the merchandise required, perhaps beautiful pieces of linen, are being displayed.

In buying lace, which is laid flat, to be better shown,

women are easily attracted by the rhythm of a well regulated pattern. This is the reason why the manufacturers prefer symmetrical patterns and order details similar to those designed for coloured papers. But when the lace is used for head-dresses, cravats, handkerchiefs, tunics, or scarves, when it is gathered into flounces, ruffled into cuffs or frills, what becomes of the regularity of the repeated or the grace of the alternated figures? For such purposes it appears to us far preferable to use fanciful half defined subjects, a skilful confusion, carefully calculated to be the equivalent of a latent order—I might say of a charming disorder.

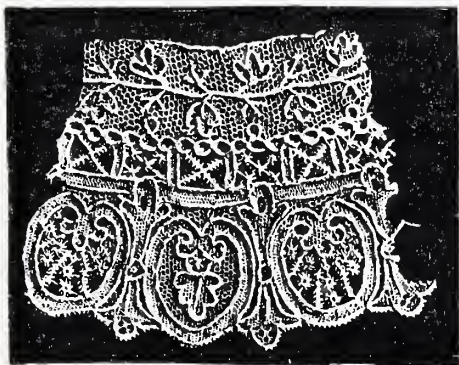
The pretty scrolls, where nothing seems either to advance or to retreat, except in the folds which may be made in them, are simply interceptions of light when the lace is looked through, and an interception of transparency, when the pattern is clearly defined against darker shades, or if the lace is black, against pale silks or the whiteness of the skin.

The confusion is sufficiently redeemed by the regularity of the *réseau*, and there is no objection to the work being relieved by the accentuation of lighter or stronger tracings, the avoidance of any imitation of nature being the essential object.

Now let us speak of the point or stitch. The point is of so much importance, that it has been from the beginning synonymous with lace, and since it varies with the localities where it is produced, the laces are called Brussels point, point d'Alençon, Honiton point, Genoese point, Venetian point, Hungarian point. The variations in point are numerous, but above all other differences,

one great distinction must be first established. Lace is made in three ways ; with a needle, with bobbins, and with machinery, and each of these methods has its different aspects, its qualities, its defects, its varying shades.

Needle-lace.—All the world acknowledges that the point d'Alençon, which is made with a needle, is the richest and most beautiful of all. And the value of this lace not only arises from its representing a considerable



POINT D'ALENÇON.

amount of labour, but also because nothing can replace in human productions the fabrics made by a man's or still more by a woman's handicraft. However the hand may be restrained by the necessity of faithfully following, on green parchment, the design imagined and traced by another person, there is always, even in copying an outline, an individuality, an imperceptible deviation to the left and to the right, above and below the tracing, which impresses on the design an accent of strength or gentleness, of indecision or determination. And when the

tracing is finished, when the outlines of the design have been marked by a thread passed through the holes, the work is given to the workwoman who prepares the *réseau*; and here again those shades re-appear which mechanism cannot reproduce, but which render the hand labour of a living being distinctly apparent, above all when the *réseau* is complicated by a *bride*. Elegant, fine, and entirely of linen thread, the Point d'Alençon unites to these qualities the beauty of having a raised ornament, such as we so often see in the drawings of great masters. I allude to the horsehair which the workwoman introduces into the *cordonnnet* or cording of the outlines to give them strength and substance, so that the edges which surround the *jours* being strongly defined, the effect produced by the difference of the lighter or closer work is heightened. The Point d'Alençon is filled in with button-hole stitch, which gives it a rich embroidered appearance, without destroying the delicacy of the lace, because the maker carefully levels the surface, that is polishes it with a burnisher, rendering it soft to the eye and touch, instead of leaving it unequal and granulated.

Finally, after many operations, which it is unnecessary to describe here, there remains the *assemblage*, which requires feminine skill and refined taste: the *assemblage* consists in uniting the separately finished pieces by means of an invisible seam, called *point de raccroc*. It is then true that if Point d'Alençon is called the Queen of Laces, it is owing to the beauty of its *fleur*, its *jours*, its foundation of *brides*, and also because to all these advantages it adds that of being entirely of needle-work.

Pillow-lace.—After the needle-laces, which unite all

the most valuable qualities, neatness and fulness, richness and elegance, rank pillow-laces. In these the dominant characteristics are the softness of the outlines, and the smoothness of the general appearance: the needle is to the bobbin what the pencil is to the stump. The design, which is softened in pillow-lace, is defined by needle-work, and in a way engraved. And here many trifles betray the influence of hand work; but to thoroughly understand these details we must first explain how pillow-lace is made.

The machine used in lace-making, which, according to the country where it is used, is called a cushion or a pillow, consists of a square box, stuffed and covered on the outside. On the upper surface, which is very sharply inclined, an opening is arranged, where a stuffed roller turns firmly on its own axle. On this roller a parchment is so placed that it falls a little over the opening; on this parchment the design has been previously pricked with pins. For the work an enormous quantity of bobbins filled with thread are required, which are interlaced according to the pattern. Pins placed in the pricked holes as fast as the work progresses, serve as land-marks to the lace-worker, and hold the stitches. The tracing having been placed so as to allow the different parts of the work to join easily, by turning the roller on which it is fixed the maker can continue the work without interruption, while in Brabant, where a simple cushion is used, the workwoman is obliged to raise the bobbins when she arrives at the end of the cushion, and to replace them at the beginning of it.*

* *La dentelle à l'aiguille et aux fuseaux*, by M. J. Seguin. Paris: Rothschild, 1874. This book, which is the work of a thoroughly competent writer,

This short description of the lace machine, shows that simple as it appears, it requires a special apprenticeship, the method of working being quite different from that used in making twisted edgings or fringes with open headings ; and from being more quickly and cheaply made than the needle-laces, the pillow-lace has a more industrial character, and for that reason a larger development.*

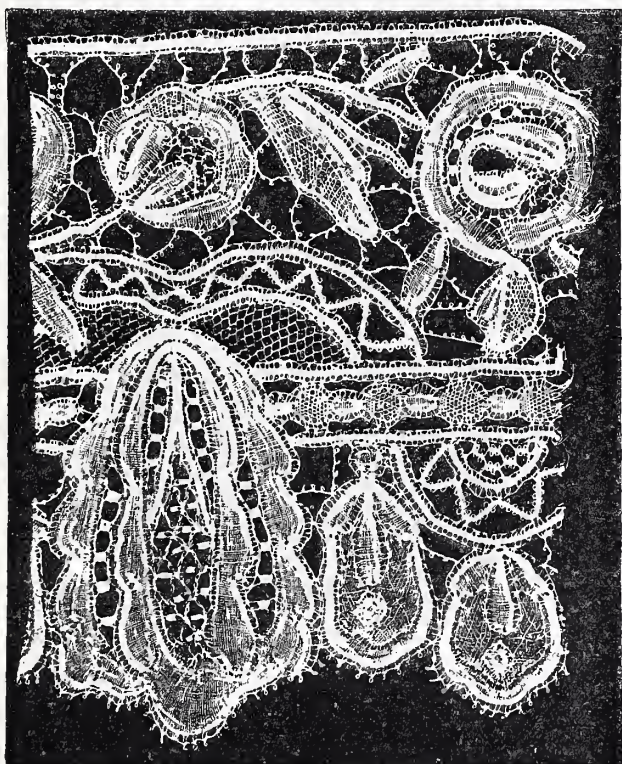
When the ruffs and frilled tuckers were imported into France from Italy, the needle-laces with which they were trimmed, finished them abruptly, giving them sharp edges, like a necklet of spikes. But when the pillow-lace was substituted for these harsh guipures, being much lighter and more flexible, it softened the outlines and rendered the pinkings of these triple frills almost ethereal, instead of their imprisoning the head and making it appear, as l'Estoille said, "like the head of John the Baptist on a charger."

The use of lace.—Once made aware of the different effects produced by needle or pillow-lace, a woman who

has been shown to us in manuscript, and we can vouch that it is most instructive and interesting. The historical criticisms are particularly remarkable. The author refutes with proofs all the errors committed by his predecessors ; he describes in detail every style of manufacture, and acquaints us with all their centres.

* This explains the reason why rich ladies even to the end of the sixteenth century continued to devote themselves to needle-work, and why so many fine collections were published for their use—at Lyons by Ostans ; at Paris, by Dominique de Sera, assistant to the celebrated artist, Jean Cousin ; at Venice, by the Seigneur de Vinciolo, Cesare Vecelli, and some anonymous authors. Most of these collections were reprinted several times, whilst after the publication called *le Pompe*, which took place in 1557, and which contained several patterns for pillow-lace, no other book of the kind was published until 1598, which is the date of Foillet's book printed at Montbéliard.

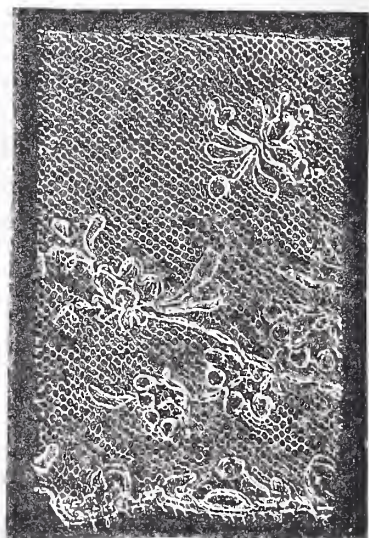
cared about her dress would select the lace most suitable to her toilet: she would not use Brussels point for strongly marked outlines, or Bruges lace where a soft flowing effect was required. She would make a distinction accord-



BRUGES LACE.

ing to the use she intended to make of it, between point d'Alençon with a well defined pattern and *fleurs* richly embroidered on a *reséau* or on a foundation of *brides*, and light Mechlin lace, in which the only accent is on the outline of the pattern. She would carefully discriminate

between the fine linen Honiton guipure with slight reliefs, and the old French point, now so frequently imitated, with its thick raised ornaments, its strong *brides picoteés*, its large *jours*, themselves a copy of the Venetian point. She would quickly notice that the appliqués called English lace and the *point de gaze* have a magnificently bold



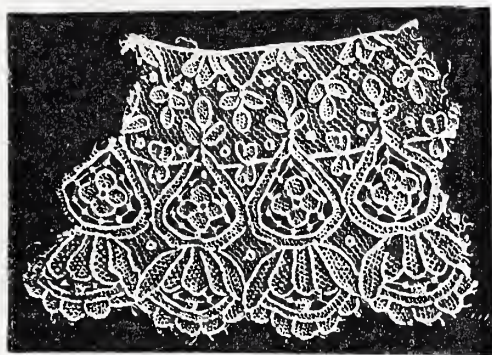
MALINES (MECHLIN) LACE.

and striking appearance, whilst the pillow-laces manufactured in Flanders, Lille, Arras, and Mirecourt have a flexible, light, and soft effect.

At the present time, now that old patterns are eagerly sought for, and the antique models are so skilfully reproduced by the lace-makers of Puy, under the name of Cluny, it is à propos to make a remark respecting the proprieties of the toilet.

Nothing that adorns the human figure is absolutely

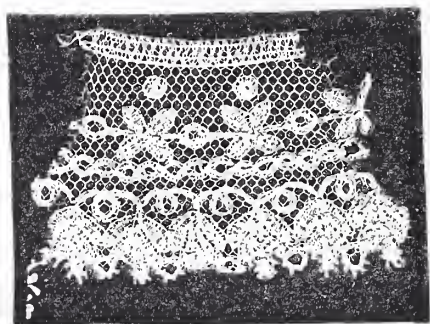
beautiful. All is relative to the wearer, her personal appearance, her moral characteristics, not to mention the harmony indispensable between an ornament so delicate and valuable as lace, and the other portions of the dress. Often an elegant woman entering a lace warehouse is asked a question which she considers quite unnecessary, "You wish to see some lace, Madam ; may I inquire for what purpose it is to be used?" "How can that affect you, Sir, that is my affair," is the usual



POINT DE GAZE, RÉSEAU AND FLEURS IN NEEDLE WORK.

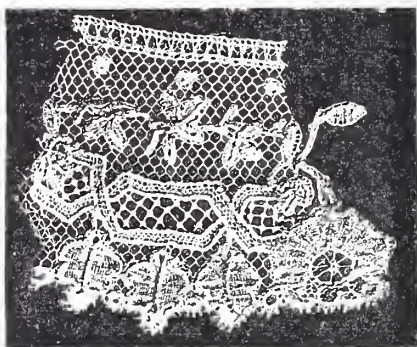
answer. And yet what a useful question, if it were candidly answered, and the questioner had good taste. What a difference there should be between lace worn by a young woman and that which is suitable for a dowager! The rank of the person, her style of living, her age, the prominence or delicacy of her features, her natural tranquillity or activity, all have an important bearing on her selection, as Montaigne said (speaking of love). Should a woman of twenty-five, with a piquant air and quick movements, place on her shoulders the thick point de

Vénise with raised ornaments, whose majestic heaviness suited the collar worn on ceremonial occasions by the Procurator of St. Mark ?



BRUSSELS APPLIQUÉ. FLEURS MADE OF PILLOW LACE AND APPLIQUÉ ON TULLE.

We must not forget that from its invention, until the end of the last century, lace was worn as much by men as by women. The Valois used it profusely.



APPLIQUÉ MIXED WITH NEEDLE POINT.

Henry III. covered himself with lace in fine gold, and he was so anxious that his ruffles should be perfectly fresh, that he goffered them himself if he fancied the plaits were

at all rumpled or limp. Subsequently, Bassompierre, Cinq-Mars, and other leaders of fashion at the court, brought the extravagance in lace to a climax. Following their example, gentlemen wore it on all parts of their dress; on their sleeves, their gloves, and on the falling collars that had replaced the ruffs: they wore tufts of it at their garters, in bows on their shoes, and in wide trimmings on the tops of their boots.

At the same time, the priest's alb, the prelate's rochet, the covering for the chalice, the altar-cloths, were adorned with rich laces suited to their destination. And this ornament was so highly esteemed by the Church that painters introduced it into their Biblical pictures. "In the Prodigal Son, by Abraham Bosse," says Mrs. Bury Palliser,* "the Mother, in anticipation of her son's return, is preparing for him a tippet trimmed with the richest point; the 'Foolish Virgins' weep with handkerchiefs bordered with it; the table-cloth of Dives, as well as the table napkins used by his guests are ornamented in the same manner."

Now that women only wear lace and men have even relinquished the *jabot*, or ruffled frill, it is important to distinguish between the old patterns that one is tempted to reproduce or imitate—between those that were worn by the exquisites of Louis XIII., or the *roués* of the Regency, and those that were invented to enrich the toilets of Madame du Lude, or Mademoiselle de Blois, or the coquettish *deshabille* of Madame de Phalaris. Care should be taken to avoid using antique altar-cloths for a petticoat, and only very handsome or elderly

* *Histoire de la Dentelle*. Paris, Firmin Didot.

women should wear the laces that formerly adorned the Princes of the Church and the gentlemen of the long robe.

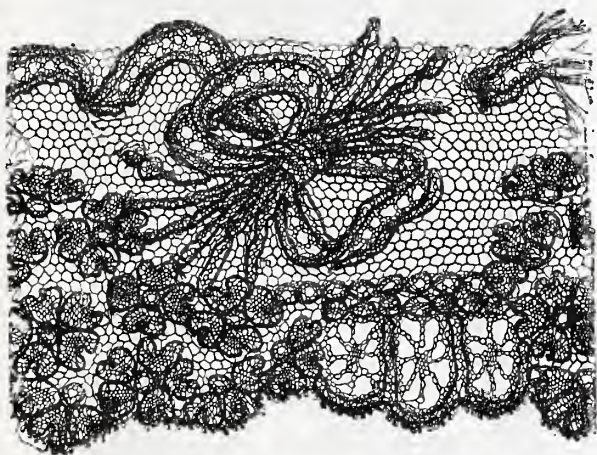
Besides these distinctions there are others quite as obvious in the laces that are made only for women. There are laces for all seasons, all hours, all the details that compose a toilet, and for all ages.

Already, under Louis XV., Point d'Alençon and Point d'Argentan were styled by etiquette, "Winter laces," and certainly the gravity of these varieties lent itself to this designation. It is not necessary to be well informed in the secrets of gods or women, to know that there are laces for morning and evening—Valenciennes with a clear ground for morning wear on the charming home dresses that require so much care in their arrangement; *mignonnettes* for light, unobtrusive head-dresses; narrow edgings for ordinary linen, and *torchon* laces, that are used to trim those costumes for the country or sea-side, which, by their elegant style, affect to disguise the homely comfortable appearance of the material, often an imitation of the dark blue linen worn by the peasants in France.

But when more important occasions are under consideration, promenade dresses, formal visiting costumes, regatta or race costumes, or ball dresses, the selection of the lace is of great consequence. Then it is that care is required to distinguish between the sedate and the frivolous, the transparent and thick, the smooth points and those in relief, the delicate insertions which ornament muslin costumes, the Bruges lace, which softens a bodice sufficiently to admit the use of small velvet bows as a relief, and the guipures, which falling in scallops round the throat

correct the stiffness of a Medicis ruff, which stands up on the neck like a fan.

To slightly rounded shoulders a flat laced bertha is most becoming; on thin shoulders it should be gathered, for lace without folds is intended to disclose what is underneath, but plaited, it serves to half veil it. For a beautiful arm and well turned wrist, plain cuffs should be preferred, while for angular proportions a fuller trimming



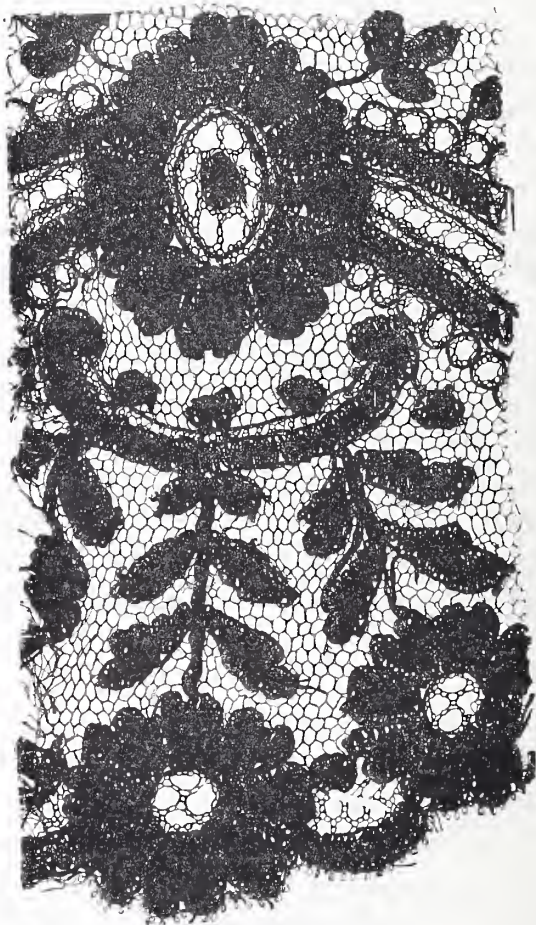
CHANTILLY.

is required. If lace is used for head-dresses, a mixture of muslin and appliqué with a few bows should form the close cap worn by elderly women, but the bonnet for a young and elegant woman should be more decidedly trimmed by a lace lappet falling over the chignon.

For sleeves, flounces, and tunic trimmings, it may be useful to add that pale tints require white flowing laces, Bruges for instance, whilst darker shades require the black laces made at Chantilly, Caen or Bayeux, for at the

present day it is in Calvados that the lace known by the generic name of Chantilly is manufactured.

Although black lace is usually regarded as a thread



BLONDE.

lace, it is always made of silk, but as this silk called grenadine is twisted, it loses its brilliancy and acquires the appearance of thread. But on the other hand no one

mistakes blonde, which is also a silk lace, whether black or white, because the pattern is filled in with a flat silk more brilliant than that which is used for the foundation.

Blondes derived their name from being first made with unbleached or yellow silk. Those now made in white for veils and mantillas have a rich silver coloured effect, which brightens the skin, and this renders them highly prized amongst dusky olive-skinned races. In Spain and in the Spanish colonies, the women reserve the white blondes for fête days, bull fights, and Easter Mondays; the contrast between their skin and the brilliant white of the silk being softened by the reflection of that white. The Mantilla in black blonde which they trim with black velvet is the most essential part of their ordinary dress; it mysteriously shrouds the face, only permitting the sparkling eyes to be visible.

Ah, what a mistake it is to consider the subject which occupies us, as futile; to think that there is frivolity or puerility in devoting so much writing to laces and blondes! Let it be well understood that the Spaniard's mantilla is sacred in the eyes of the law: it cannot be seized to pay her debts, it forms part of the woman and her dignity. The poet is a man of judgment who wrote:

Rien que pour toucher sa mantille,
De par tous les saints de Castille,
On se ferait rompre les os.

But, to return to laces, an enormous quantity of them are now manufactured in black wool. After adorning the cotton head-dress of the poorest peasants, these guipures have become the fashion. Flounces, dresses, veils,

shawls, and mantles, are made of them. They are used instead of fringe in the loose fitting, ready made cloaks and jackets, and in those street-costumes and semi-morning toilets in which Parisians excel and which sometimes seem inspired by a refinement of coquetry.

A Chantilly shawl is only suitable for summer costumes. In spring, when it is no longer cold and yet not warm; in autumn when the seasons are reversed and the cold is approaching, woollen guipure—now called lama, as though it were made from the hair of that animal—is a valuable accessory in dress. On this account, it has been subjected to imitation and sold at a low price. We here reach the third description of lace, which are machine laces.

Machine laces. The first time that mechanism invaded the peaceful domain of lace-making, was in the manufacture of tulle. After several experiments made towards the end of the last century, consisting in the transformation of a stocking-loom into a loom for knitting in meshes, the bobbin loom was invented, which is the only one producing by machinery the hexagon mesh used in pillow lace. Through this invention immense machines, moved by steam, weave upwards of sixteen thousand meshes per minute, whilst a lace-maker can on an average produce but five or six meshes in the same time: one may therefore say that the machine replaces the work of twelve thousand women.

The tulle bobbin once invented—at first it was a plain *réseau*—the manufacturers proceeded to work, on the meshes, the small spots called *points d'esprit*; then applying Jacquard's system to the tulle-loom, they produced

those embroidered textures called machine lace, of which so many veils, shawls, scarves, and fanciful ornaments have been made. Finally, the Lyonese perfected these fabrics, by adding a skilful touch of hand work to that of the machine. The pattern which leaves the Jacquard loom is defined and ornamented by a silk thread, which gives it a shade of resemblance to real lace.

After all, this resemblance is very deceitful. It is easy to say that there is no difference or very little between machine and hand work ; it is none the less true that the *point de gaze*, for instance, which is made entirely, both *fleurs* and *réseau* in needlework, by the workers of Brussels, is of unequalled fineness in quality and of incomparable beauty. The same workwoman weaving with bobbins and linen thread the *réseau* that is to be the foundation of an appliqué lace, adds to it a lightness and delicacy that the loom can never perfectly imitate, and the woman who makes the *fleurs* with her needle which are to be appliqué on the *réseau* or on the tulle, gives a style to the texture of the *fleurs* and to the *brodé*, that is, to the points in relief, which machinery can never attain.

But how mysterious and strange are the results of human invention ! Is it a subject for congratulation or regret that human labour is superseded by the machine which diminishes, and we might say destroys it ? This is a serious question. How many troubles were brought into the daily life of humble families ! How much anguish was caused by a discovery which is to profit, so they say, the people who suffer most from it to-day ! In travelling through Flanders, Brabant, Normandy and Auvergne, one sees through the windows of a room on

the ground floor, young girls bending over their cushions, wielding innumerable bobbins around innumerable pins, twisting, crossing, interlacing them, without a single mistake, picking them up, dropping them to retake them, and drop them again, watching that they are always filled with thread, pricking in the pins, taking them from one place where there are too many, to put them in another where there are too few—in a word making nearly one hundred and fifty-two thousand evolutions for a design of ten inches, amounting to seventy-seven movements in a minute ; and one is startled, horrified at the work entailed upon these living machines, whose intelligence seems bounded by their threads and imprisoned in the meshes of their work. One questions whether the life of these creatures, born to please and to be loved, ought to be entirely absorbed in rendering other creatures more attractive and more pleasing, and one hopes that the machines which at first sight seem instruments of slavery, may some day become a means of alleviation and of freedom.

XVI.

OF ALL THE ARTS WHICH ARE TREATED OF IN THIS BOOK, THE JEWELLER'S AND GOLDSMITH'S ARE THE MOST VALUABLE.

The jewel, which is so well adapted to a woman's adornment, is a combination of the riches of nature and art ; it is concentrated brilliancy, the quintessence of light.

Incredible fact, marvellous truth ! In the bowels of the earth, in the deserted channels of exhausted torrents, in the gloomy depths of the mineral world, stars are concealed that rival in their beauty those of the firmament. The fresh splendours of dawn, the sun's incandescent

rays, the magnificent sunsets, the brilliant colours of the rainbow, all are found enclosed in a morsel of pure carbon or in the centre of a stone. They all result from the mysterious, one might say the awful, property possessed by the molecules of certain bodies, of obeying the laws of attraction, in the same way as the stars of heaven obey them, and of uniting as though urged by the secret instinct of the beautiful, to compose prismatic forms of astonishing regularity, and often of perfect symmetry.

All the luminous and coloured spectacles which the world in the immensity of space can offer us, nature has produced in miniature amongst precious stones. The ruby encloses the brilliant red of the clouds of evening; the sapphire, varying from dark to pale blue, is a concentration of azure. The emerald condenses the green of the meadows and certain aspects of the ocean. The topaz is a miniature reproduction of the rich gold which illumines the setting sun. The opal resembles a fraction of the rainbow softened by a milky cloud. The aquamarine, which has the colour of Persian blue, has the glassy tint of the waves of the sea. The violet of the amethyst represents the deep purple shade of the heavens, and the hyacinth is like the tints of dawn passing from saffron to orange. Thus, as man is a summary of anterior creations, an epitome of the world, so the diamond and other precious stones are focuses of light, and essences of colour which seem expressly created to ornament on a small scale the human body with all the splendours which adorn the universe on a large scale.

But nature only produces diamonds and other jewels in a rough state. For man is reserved the task of

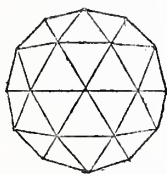
polishing them; and it is the province of art to add to them, by cutting, a new crystallisation. To render them fit to adorn a woman, men must become diamond cutters, lapidaries, jewellers and goldsmiths: they must select and cut the stones in such a manner that the luminous rays which they will refract may penetrate them; they must frame them with the precious metals so that they are held lightly, yet firmly, their colours sustained or augmented by their setting; and finally they must arrange with elegance the outlines and relief of the design—for the jewel, although engraved, chased, and brilliant with its cut, polished, and mounted stones, is no completion to a woman's adornment unless it is in itself beautiful.

The principal gem is the diamond, but it is not always pure. It is often defective and unsuitable for cutting. Sometimes it is spotted with small snowy flaws called *givres*; sometimes it is specked with points formed by heterogeneous matter, or knotted, that is the crystallisation is confused, rather like the knots in wood. The diamond is then used to make diamond dust, by rubbing two diamonds together or by grinding the crystal particles in a steel mortar. This dust is the only substance that will hew, cut, and polish diamonds.

The art of cutting diamonds has been known in Europe since the commencement of the fifteenth century, but before Louis de Berquen, who in 1475, submitted it to optical laws, it was practised in an arbitrary and imperfect fashion; the workman did not know how to give intensity to the play of light. Even in the time of Charles VII. diamonds were sometimes worn in their natural state, as they were extracted from the earth; for tradition says,

that Agnes Sorel's famous collar, which she called her carcanet, was composed of rough diamonds. Now the art of cutting them has reached perfection.

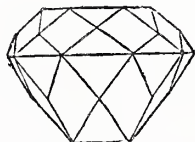
The workman commences by grinding the diamond, rubbing one against another, to divest it of the earthy crust that clouds it. Afterwards, if it is of a bad shape,



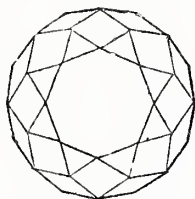
ROSE DIAMOND, FULL VIEW.



ROSE IN PROFILE.



BRILLIANT IN PROFILE.



BRILLIANT, FULL VIEW.

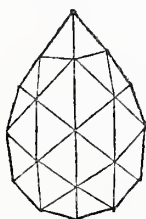
it is altered by sawing or cleaving it. The former operation is performed by means of a bow, on which a metal string is stretched and continually powdered with diamond dust; the cleavage consists in splitting the diamond with a steel knife, by a sharp blow struck in the direction of the laminae, for the diamond, in spite of its extreme hardness, can be easily broken, because it is

formed like other crystals of laminae, arranged in successive layers on an original nucleus. This done, a paste of diamond dust and oil is made and spread over a horizontal steel grindstone, and the diamond, being pressed against the surface, is polished and cut with facets by a rapid rotatory motion. This completes the cutting and the polishing. Formerly the lapidaries were content to cut the two principal sides of the diamond table-shape, and to bevel the sides; but they only used this mode of cutting for diamonds of inferior quality.

The only shapes now used are the brilliant and the rose. The latter gives the diamond the form of a pyramid with a flat wide base and triangular facets, twenty-four in number for the roses called Dutch diamonds, and eighteen for those called semi-Dutch. The rose is sometimes mounted transparently; at other times the base is hidden in the setting. The cutting called brilliant consists in having the upper side an octagonal table, with a diameter equalling one third of the axis, surrounded by eight facets forming the crown, and the lower part an octagonal table of smaller diameter called the collet (*culasse*), and also surrounded by eight facets symmetrically inclined in the inverse way forming the *pavilion*. The angle which separates one from the other is called *feuilletis*. By this part the stone is held in the setting. Each of the eight facets receives four smaller facets, some triangular, others lozenge or diamond shaped; the brilliant is then said to be recut, and it has no less than sixty-four facets, without counting the table and the collet. And since the light, through being refracted on all sides by the number of facets, multiplies its rays,

the brilliant should always be set transparently. But who can help admiring the precision in the minuteness of the work, when the lapidary is able to cut thirty-two facets on a particle of diamond not larger than a pin's head, and twenty-four, or at least eighteen, if it is cut rose shaped !

The brilliant shape is cut on stones naturally spherical; when the rough diamond is pear-shaped, the facets are cut at all angles, and it forms a brillolette. The pendants shaped like a half pear have a collet and



BRILLOLETTE.

a table, and are cut into facets on the side of the collet. Well-cut pendants are much sought after, and are dearer than brilliants.

How much art and science, and what attention, what care is necessary to render the sun-beams which are imprisoned in a tiny polyhedron of pure carbon, brilliant and sparkling !

But there is one stone more valuable even than the diamond, the oriental ruby, when it is of a considerable size and clear, deep coloured crimson. The mine which produced this ruby having been lost for more than a century, these gems are now found only in jewel caskets. The most beautiful came from Ceylon, India, and China. Yet, whatever the market value of precious

stones, a value dependent upon their rarity, we should here notice the part they play in personal adornment, and consider them with reference to their beauty, their colour, their brilliancy, their æsthetic character, and their momentary fitness in the toilet.

If gems and other precious substances used in jewellery were to be classed, not according to the price jewellers ask for them, but according to their beauty, we should place in the first rank, the diamond, the ruby, the sapphire, the emerald, the topaz, the opal, the pearl, and the western turquoise, called old rock; in the second rank the Syrian garnet, the amethyst, the aqua-marine, and the coral; and in the third, the peridot, the tourmaline, the lapislazuli, the girasole, amber, and all the varieties of agate, such as the chalcedony, the blood-red cornelian, the chrysoprasus with the green tint of a leek, and the onyx which is so well suited to cameo engraving.

In the eyes of an artist, who regards beauty before everything else, the stones in the first and second rank are the only really precious ones, the remainder being simply fine stones. But each has its style, its use, and its place in the toilet, I was about to say its hour, without alluding to its mysterious connection with sentiment, for women attach superstitious ideas to certain stones even in France, where the spirit of irony is so powerful and so alert. The opal, for instance, which should be eagerly sought for its beautiful and changing colours, inspires them with a vague dread of not being loved. The emerald, on the contrary, is a promise of happiness, and is worn as a talisman and as a jewel. Other stones perplex their thoughts and interest their heart's secret devotion.

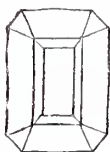
Again, the poetry of colours has a language and shades for stronger minds which are above feminine weaknesses. There may be something melancholy in the colour of the aqua-marine, which reflects the sadness of the waves ; and a disquieting element in the livid tint of the amethyst, if much used as an ornament. It is easy to imagine the sapphire's celestial blue an emblem of purity and love, and the ruby's crimson an expression of triumphant valour and pride.

However, precious stones are also uncertain ; they are apt to fade, to deepen, or to become discoloured under certain influences. Women know that the sapphire, which is, by daylight, so pure and soft a blue, in the evening loses its brightness, and deepens almost into a violet black. Thus they prefer pale azure sapphires which retain their brilliancy under artificial light. The emerald darkens by candle-light, and, under the same influence, Cape diamonds, which by day are disfigured by a pale lemon colour, lose this tint, and regain the beauty of their latent fire. The Brazilian topaz, warmed to a certain temperature, takes the rosy hue of the balas ruby, and the name of burnt topaz ; the tone of the eastern turquoise, called old rock, sometimes fades, loses its polish with time, and finally disappears. Fire blanches the sapphire, and robs the amethyst of its colour.

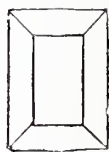
The opal is impaired by the prolonged influence of a damp atmosphere ; it is the most sensitive of minerals, equally fearing heat and cold. The warmth of the sun, by dilating the minute particles of air enclosed in the opal, causes it to lose its colour, and intense cold produces

cracks on the surface of the gem, which, sometimes, nearly extinguish its charming rainbow tints.

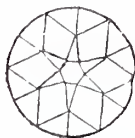
The pearl, slowly secreted by shellfish with nacreous valves at the bottom of the sea, deteriorates when brought into contact with acids. It can be dissolved in vinegar, like the one Cleopatra tried to drink in the banquet she gave in honour of Marc Antony. Impure



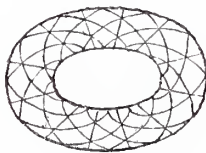
GEM CUT IN STEPS.



GEM CUT TABLE SHAPE.



STAR SHAPED CUTTING.



PORTUGUESE CUTTING.

air tarnishes them—ages them, is the expression used by jewellers—and it even robs them of the soft changing silvery brilliancy, known as their water, and which once lost is never regained; they then become like the pearls found on the coast of Scotland, which are called dead pearls, and resemble fishes' eyes.

Besides these variations, precious stones gain or lose value and brilliancy according to the way in which they

are cut ; they are never perfectly beautiful without the lapidary's aid.

Coloured stones cannot be treated like diamonds : they cannot be broken, because the price would diminish with the size, and the small pieces cannot be used to make rose sparks ; for, if the base of a precious stone were flat like that of a rose, it would lose its brilliancy. But the lapidary can remove the imperfections of a ruby, a sapphire, or an emerald, by polishing it *en cabochon* instead of cutting it, and thus giving it the oval form of a drop of tallow. This shape is most suited to the opal, the turquoise, the coral, cornelian, and malachite. The *cabochon* is single when it represents half of a tallow drop, and double when, like an almond, it is rounded above and below. A bevel is then cut in the side to mark the junction of the almond's two halves. Sometimes, while the upper side is polished, the under is cut in facets, in order that the play of light may be more animated.

The brilliant cutting, star cutting, and Portuguese cutting with spherical triangles, are suitable to rubies, sapphires, topaz and amethyst. The emerald and beryl are cut in steps, that is, on the upper side there is a flat surface, sometimes rectangular, sometimes square, with rounded angles, then two steps, then below two more steps surrounding a square facet which forms the collet. Thus the lapidary's art consists either in assisting the refraction of light by facets, or in augmenting the transparency of the stone by the size of the surfaces or by the smoothness of the polish. He perfects the beauty of the gems, by calling geometry to the sun's aid. Where the lapidary's work ends, the arts of the jeweller and

goldsmith commence. In the present day their crafts are no longer distinct, though their labour differs. When the precious metals are only used as a setting for the gems, the work belongs to the jeweller; when the stones only serve to enhance the beauty of the gold and silver work, the objects belong to the goldsmith. For instance, let us take a jewel shaped like a butterfly: if the principal parts are in gold, the chief work would not be done by a jeweller; the insect's body, its antennæ with their tiny clubs, the open wings with their veinings, the holes which receive the roses and brilliants, the minute claws which seize and hold the gems, are all made by the goldsmith. But, if the body is of opal or labrador, the wings of striated or ribboned agate, the antennæ of sardonyxes, and the eyes of rubies, the butterfly would be the jeweller's work.

But, although the colouring is very important in jewels, we must first direct our attention to their shape, and it is most difficult to limit the designs, for nature has furnished us, for her share in the work, with treasures of light and colour.

XVII.

ORDER BEING AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT IN THE COMPOSITION OF A JEWEL,
THE METHODS WHICH SHOULD CHIEFLY BE USED ARE REPETITION,
ALTERNATION, SYMMETRY, RADIATION, PROGRESSION, AND CONSONANCE.

The principles which we asserted in the commencement of this book, apply quite as much to jewellery as to gold and silver work, ceramic art, and other branches of decoration and ornament.

The design will have a more or less sober and severe character, according to the method used by the designer,

whether he has repeated the details or varied them, employed similarity or contrast. If a Queen's crown, or a diadem for a proud beauty, had to be produced, the repetition of the same ornaments would produce an impressive effect. This can be verified in the Etruscan, Grecian, and Egyptian jewels. All those that have been executed in the repetition style have an hieratic, ceremonious, and striking appearance. For instance, a succession of gems, carved to represent the heads of gods or the portraits of heroes, is, at a little distance, exceedingly handsome, and its beauty is enhanced on closer examination by the slight differences in the faces. Again in a series of sacred vipers raising their heads, or a row of scarabæi inscribed with legends, the significance of the image is increased by its continued reduplication.

But usually the simple repetition is relieved by the interposition of a larger ornament, corresponding with the frontal axis in a crown, and with the central line of the body in a necklace. Often it is progressive, and then it is redeemed by the gradual diminution of the details from the centre to the ends, a diminution which gives importance to the central bead, if it is a string of pearls, and to the central cameo in a diadem or bracelet, if the detailed ornaments are carved heads.

But if the repetition is modified by simple or complicated alternation, called by analogy recurrence, the style of the jewel, although retaining its dignity, becomes less severe and more pleasing. Antique jewellery gives us plenty of examples. Now it is a necklace of beads with ovules, flower buds or amphoræ, suspended between them; now it is a row of agate balls, parallel with a

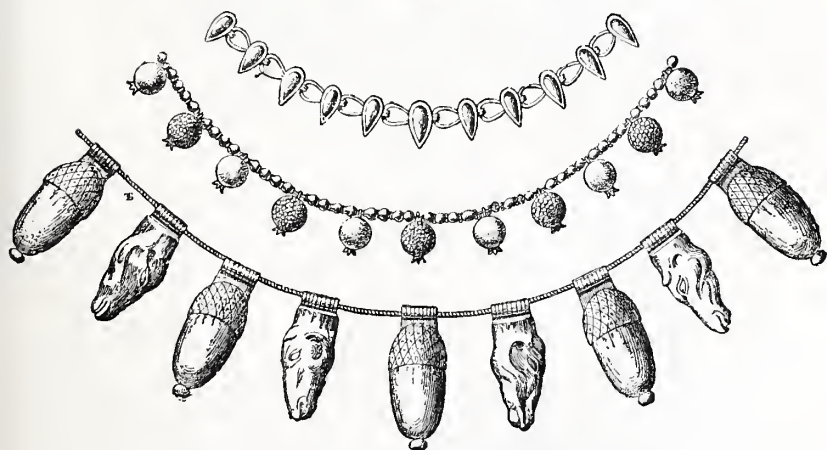
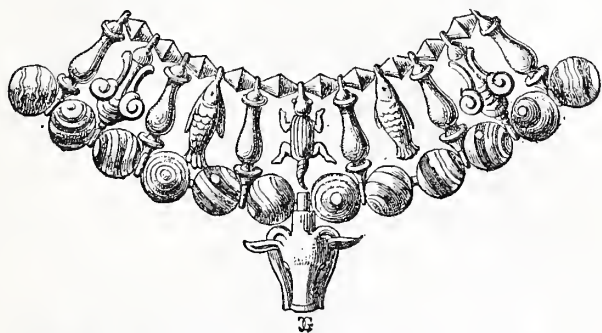
chaplet of spherical diamonds, the two rows being united by spindle shells alternating with fish or lizards.

Sometimes acorns are mingled with muzzles of animals in miniature, or a thread of small bells, resembling lilies of the valley, are strung with tiny pomegranates alternately smooth and rough. In all cases, whether the repetition is plain or relieved by the introduction of similar forms, jewels thus designed have always a serious air through their regularity, at the same time that they please the eye, because it seizes the details without effort, and feels the restful sensation always produced by repetition and rhythm.

If symmetry is necessary anywhere it is particularly required in jewellery, because art is represented in infinitesimal proportions, and the tenuity of the jewel is frequently its most exquisite charm and most valuable quality. If a jewel is not easily deciphered, if its ornaments require enlarging to be clearly seen, the eye is not satisfied, it is fatigued by the effort of distinguishing a multitude of confused details. But order and regularity enable the most trifling embellishment to be seen and appreciated. Far from excluding richness it renders it possible, because without clearness of design the richness of detail is only embarrassing, becoming an encumbrance instead of a decoration.

In no other work of art is it so necessary to make variety consistent with unity, and for this reason the goldsmith-jeweller should choose between the various styles of ornamentation, those which are most favourable to clear and distinct perceptions. He should exclude any system of complication.

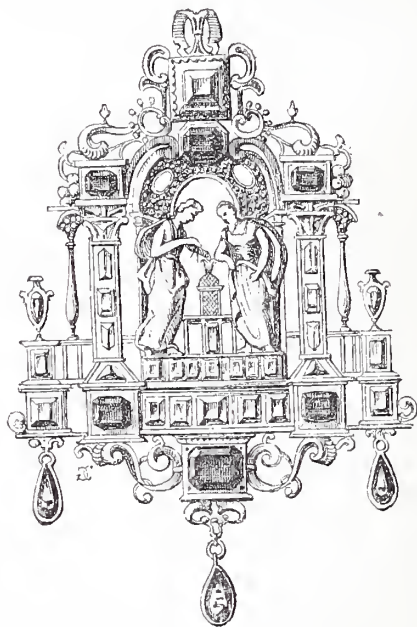
No doubt ingenious labyrinths of ornament can be invented and applied to architectural decoration, after the



SPECIMENS OF ALTERNATION AND RECURRENCE.

manner of the Arabians, in mural surfaces, doors, open enclosures, and friezes. Designs for mosaic pavements,

damascened caskets, jewel boxes, and vases may be complicated, but to complicate the design of a jewel is to make incomprehensible that which it is already difficult to comprehend. When a printer has arranged a text in nonpareil he endeavours to compensate for the diminutiveness of the type by the extreme distinctness of the press work ; but



PENDANT ATTRIBUTED TO BENVENUTO CELLINI.

even then he knows that many readers will be discouraged by its size. In a jewel, distinctness is only attainable by the repetition or the periodical recurrence of the same objects. And it is scarcely necessary to add that if complication is out of place in an earring or a ring—and the smaller the jewel the more out of place is the complication—by the same rule, even regulated

confusion must be dispensed with, except on surfaces large enough to allow the eye to unravel the obscurities of a decoration, in whose disorder there is a latent equilibrium. Benvenuto Cellini was unquestionably an incomparable goldsmith, a clever enameller, a perfect worker in niello. He possessed in the highest degree the feeling of elegance which characterises the Italian Renaissance, and yet amongst the jewels that he made



ENSEIGNE AND CARTOUCHE ATTRIBUTED TO BENVENUTO CELLINI.

under the name of pendants—a name which he gives them in his *Traité d'Orfèvrerie*—there is not one that can equal the beauty of the antiques. His works are disfigured either by the multiplication of details or by the unlucky idea of forming articles of jewellery like architectural monuments. We have seen some remarkable specimens of his work in the Cabinet of Antiques, in the Bibliothèque Nationale, and in the collection of gems possessed by Debruge-Duménil.*

* The jewels engraved here are taken from M. Jules Labarte's clever book, *L'Histoire des Arts industriels au Moyen Age*.

Here is a vaulted niche flanked by two columns in table-diamonds and crowned with two volutes, forming an arched pediment, which is broken to allow a ruby to be inserted in the centre. Two small figures, in chased gold and in high relief, of a woman and an old man studying astronomy, are placed in this recess, the roof of which is enamelled with blue and studded with stars. Rubies are set in the pedestals, the edifice is crowned by a large diamond, surmounted by a cartouche; ruby vases decorate the sides, and it is terminated at the bottom by a stem supporting pendants.

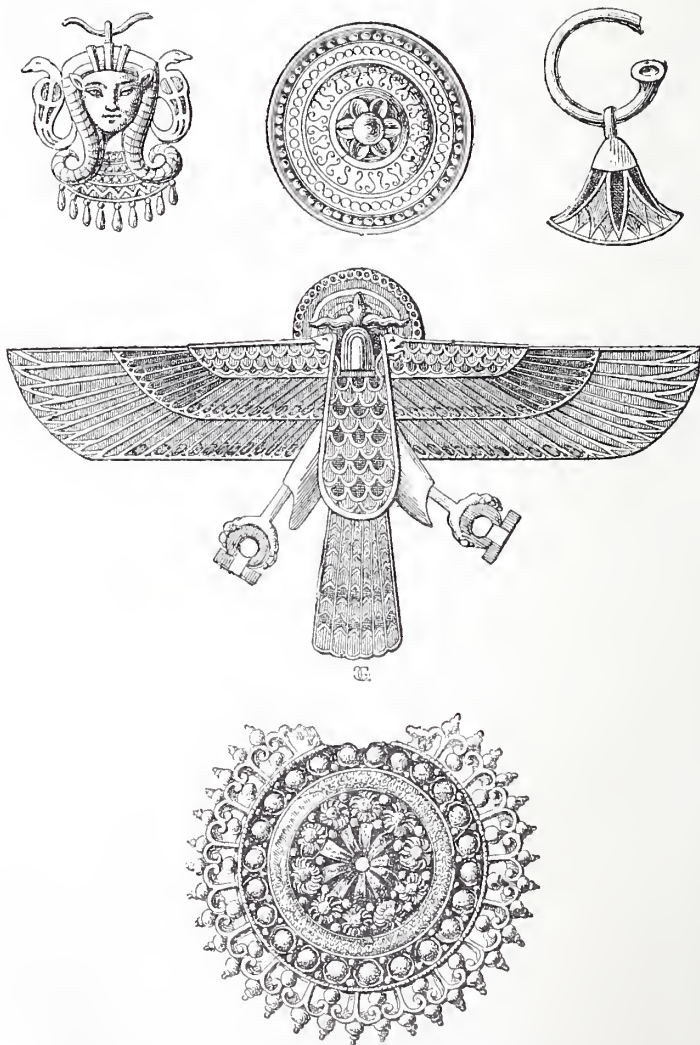
It is easy to understand that this jewel is unfortunately designed, and that so injudicious a complication has the disadvantage of fatiguing the eye and the attention. It cannot be used as an ear-ring, because it would be ridiculous to suspend a monument in the ears; nor is it suitable for a shoulder-knot or a necklace pendant, for an architectural composition, complicated with human figures, vases, scrolls, cornices, and brackets, cannot be well seen without close examination, and after a prolonged attention, which would be inconvenient to the wearer.

But the fault which strikes us here is not visible in the Florentine artist's other works, particularly in the medallions, that he carved better than anyone else, and which were called *enseignes*, because they were worn in the hat or in the hair. If the jeweller is guided by the principles which we consider correct, he will regard progression as one of the most suitable styles of design for his work, and contrast, which is only the highest form of alternation, one of his greatest resources. Progression may be strongly marked or gently managed; in the latter

case it is only a gradation. In order to augment the importance of the central ornament in the jewel, the eye is led up to it by an increasing and decreasing progression, which makes us better realise its proportions, by indicating, so to speak, the succession of efforts by which nature has arrived at the production of such a beautiful diamond, pearl, ruby, or emerald, which seems the limit of her generative powers. By thus following the steps that form this succession of gradations, the eye will be more struck by the last dimension. Thus understood, progression is a mode of contrast, but a contrast subdued and graduated. To give it the strongest expression, the contrast must be striking and abrupt, and in a jewel this can only be obtained by the juxtaposition of colour, and the opposition produced by the smooth gold, silver, and steel, and the portions of the jewel which are chased, engraved, fretted, or inlaid.

But whichever system is adopted by the designer of the jewel, a certain order and rhythm are necessary. Nature is irregular in her greatest works, but always symmetrical in her smaller ones; the goldsmith-jeweller should follow her example in his crowns, his necklets, his stomachers, his neck-pendants and lockets, his earrings, his brooches, his clasps, his rings. And *à propos* of symmetry, we would remark that several of these articles of jewellery are especially suitable for a particular style of symmetry—radiation. The small field or garden flowers, the daisy, the corn-flower, the camomile, the marigold, the feverfew, the colt's-foot, offer finely radiating corollas, their forms and delicate symmetry being perfectly appropriate to certain ornaments. A star of

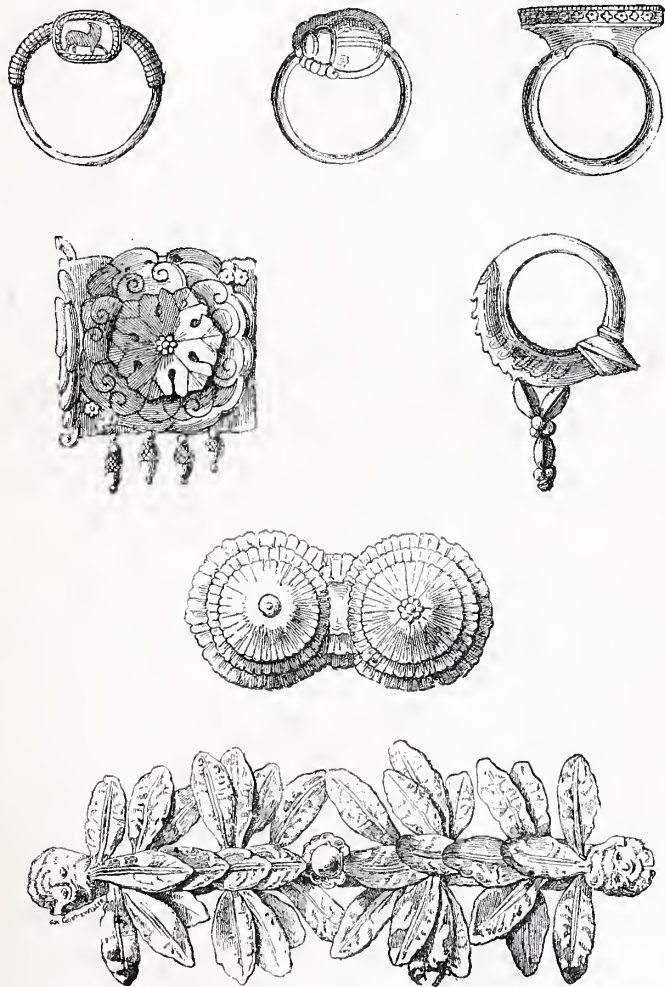
diamonds or of precious stones is most suitable for the centre of a diadem. The radiating style, which the Egyptians used so successfully in their winged scarabæi as well



JEWELS RADIATING OR FAN-SHAPED.

as in the cornices of their porticoes, is well adapted to

ear-rings, because the quiet regularity of a jewel designed in a disk form or fan shape contrasts well with the form of the ear, which is naturally variable, fanciful, and uncertain.



VARIOUS ETRUSCAN AND GRECO-ETRUSCAN JEWELS.

The Etruscans also made the upper part of their ear-

rings either in circular or notched plates. The Grecian fibulæ were usually round brooches, and the Athenian artists, who manufactured such fine jewels for the kings of the Cimmerian Bosphorus, and for the rich inhabitants of the Hellenic colony of Theodosia, recalled the roundness of the gem by the spherical form of its reliefs. For instance, they placed concentric rows of pearls or of small beads round the circular centre, formed by a ranunculus surrounded by chrysanthemums. This style is now called consonance, and is a remembrance, an echo of original harmony.

Here then we again find the repetition doubled, I mean the persistence in a regular return to the primitive shape of the object. So true it is that similarity, or at least analogy of details is essential in all ornamentation, and particularly in jewels, otherwise their diminutiveness would render them unintelligible.

XVIII.

THE DECLINE OF SYMBOLISM HAS CAUSED THE DISAPPEARANCE OF A PART OF THE CHARM OF JEWELLERY, BY GIVING INCREASING IMPORTANCE TO THE IMITATION OF REAL OBJECTS.

In the earliest ages, jewels were emblems. The gems worn by men and women bore the impression of profound sentiment, or contained some allusion to a religious idea. The soul was never entirely lost sight of even in the most frivolous and luxurious articles, and everything that added to the charm of an ornament was a delight to the mind. Thus in far distant times, imitation was always interpretive and conventional, because it was subordinate to the expression of an idea. The breastplate worn by the Egyptian high priest, and often

found on mummies, represented a temple, a *naos*, but this temple was signified by a fictitious symbol. The animals—which the Egyptians imitated with much naïve and striking truth, even when they composed them of heterogeneous parts, giving the head of an eagle to a griffin, or wings to vipers—were amongst this people not so much real representations as modes of writing, thoughts made evident. The uræus, the vulture, the hawk, the jackal, the lion, the cat, the human-headed bird, were so many symbols, signs, or omens. When we see two sphinxes facing one another, guarding the

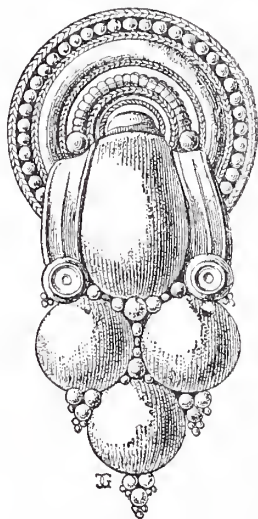


EGYPTIAN JEWEL WITH HORUS EYES.

royal cartouche on the crown of the Queen Aah Hotep, mother of Amasis; when we find two hawks soaring, emblems of the sun, on a breastplate, we can easily understand that in these cases the representations had a solemn and mystic character. What would become of the symbolism of a necklace of anserated crosses, alternating with the eye of Horus, if the eyes were exactly copied from nature, instead of being in some degree deified by the algebra of design and the conventions of colour? This, however, did not interfere with the delicacy of the setting, nor with the value of the carving and chasing of the breastplates, and the elytra of the scarabæus in lapis or green jasper, nor with

the finished workmanship of the wings, incrustated with precious stones or coloured glass surrounded by golden divisions. But, we must repeat it once more, the imitation retained an hieratic and tacitly conventional appearance.

More attached to truth and more faithful to nature, the Greeks, and after them the Romans, employed a plastic symbolism and emblems devoid of mystery and easily understood. Their attributes were not arbitrary ; even



ETRUSCAN JEWEL.

their monsters, centaurs, and satyrs seem to have a possible existence. The only violence offered to human nature was used to render it perfect. From that time all ornaments, from the greatest to the smallest, from architecture to jewellery, were characterised by a closer and more decided imitation of the real. And, in truth, it is natural that visible forms should be more faithfully rendered than those which are purely imaginary.

At the Byzantine epoch, Christian superstition revived the use of amulets. A mysterious significance was attached to rings and to certain jewels, which were unobtrusive, and therefore easily hidden in times of persecution. Interpretation resumed its empire, and imitation became more conventional. Symbolism took refuge in heraldry, which lends a language to enamels, that is, to colours, and in which every figure is an emblem. But at the Renaissance symbolism was depreciated; it declined; degenerated until it gradually became altogether disused. In our time it has lost its dignity, and, excepting in archæological researches, it has neither attraction nor interest. For this reason our jewels, being simply imitative, are only rendered pleasing by the optical beauty of the metals and gems, by the elegance of their outlines, and by the delicacy and perfection of the workmanship in their mounting.

Excepting a few emblems of inconstancy or of love, which amuse us, jewellery now only displays forms borrowed from geometry, architecture, or the vegetable kingdom, or from playthings, but, at any rate, we no longer seek, as in the Renaissance, to introduce into a jewel the entire human figure.

XIX.

THE REPRESENTATION OF THE HUMAN BODY, SCULPTURED IN RELIEF, HOWEVER SLIGHT IT MAY BE, IS UNSUITABLE IN A JEWEL WHICH IS TO BE WORN.

WHEN carved in relief on onyx, or in intaglio on cornelian, the human figure is only one ornament superimposed and fastened on another, from which it is inseparable. The jewel is then enhanced by a fine stone;

which becomes a cameo or an intaglio. But when the figure is represented, either as a caryatid in an architectural design, or as engaged in an action requiring decided movement, it completely disfigures the jewel, because it is lowered from its natural rank; for the human body is too rich in form, has too much beauty and importance, and is too high in the scale of creation to play an accessory part amongst images drawn from the vegetable world, or from geometry. When Benvenuto Cellini, in modelling the pendant which is preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale, and is otherwise so precious, carved upon it the figure of Apollo on the keystone of an arch, and two of the muses on the pediments, accompanied by griffins and chimeras, he made a work of art, and not a jewel. An ornament in this style is, by its very beauty, condemned to be useless. A woman who possessed it might show it to others to admire, but she could not wear it. How could she exhibit on her breast, or suspend in her ears or on her neck miniature statues, the perfection of whose beauty would attract all admiration from the person they adorned? It must be remembered that utility belongs to the industrial kingdom, and that beauty is the prerogative of the artistic world. Every object destined for use can be embellished, but cannot be intrinsically beautiful, for if its chief characteristic is beauty, it is no longer suitable for use. Only a savage would put salt into Benvenuto's famous salt-cellar, or use a Panathenian amphora in offering wine to his guests.

The designer of jewellery should think much less of displaying his talents than of enhancing the beauty of his work, in order to render the woman who is to wear it

more attractive. The Greeks with their delicacy of perception understood or divined this; they have not carved human figures in relief on their jewels. Their bracelets, necklaces, diadems, fibulæ, and pins are only ornamented with portions of the human body, a man or woman's head, a bust in armour, a hand holding an apple, a mask of Medusa or of Bacchus, with bull's ears or dishevelled hair, represented by spiral gold threads. It is quite exceptional, when the Etruscans suspended imperceptible figures of children, in relief, to



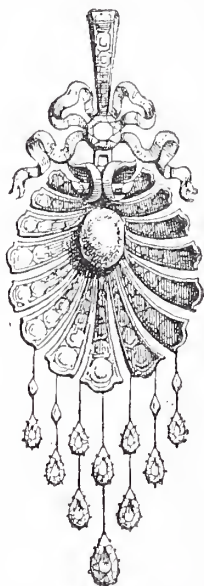
GRECO-ETRUSCAN EAR-RINGS.

their earrings. Animals even are only represented in antique jewellery by their muzzles—at least, as far as quadrupeds are concerned. Amongst other animals, reptiles, birds, and insects, such as the bee, the grasshopper, the scarabæus, and the butterfly, are represented entire. A serpent curves himself to form a bracelet, raising his head or biting his tail. A lizard glides on the cover of a fibula. Sometimes a cock, a dove, or a swan in white enamel is suspended to Greco-Etruscan ear-rings. But the complete human figure, in full relief, would be as rarely found in antique jewellery as it is inappropriate in modern.

XX.

OF ALL THE RESOURCES AT THE JEWELLER'S COMMAND ENAMELLING
REQUIRES THE MOST ARTISTIC TREATMENT.

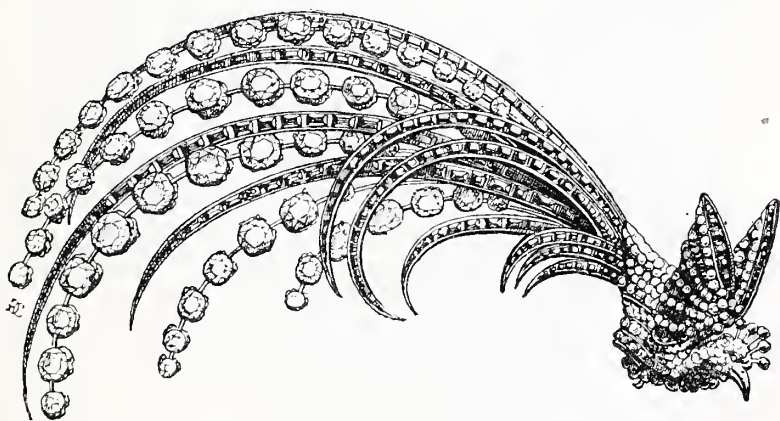
WHAT choice of models remains then to the jeweller, when the human figure and the representation of animals are prohibited? He has the vegetable world, radiating bodies like the stars, architectural ornaments and artificial



objects, such as the innumerable instruments invented by man in the exercise of the arts and industrial pursuits, music, agriculture, war, the chase, navigation, gold and silver work, liturgical ornaments, which have a mental significance, and generally the old heraldic figures.

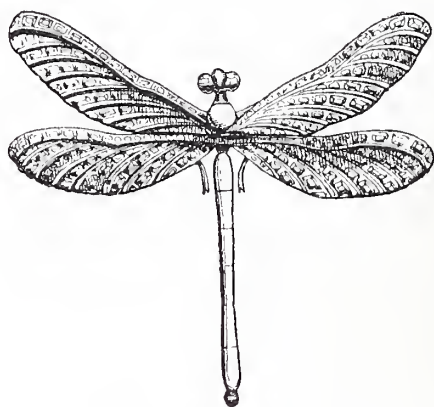
By the mixture of these resources, the details may be infinitely varied, and made charming, on the understanding

that the workman does not attempt to imitate that which is inimitable. For instance, for the last twenty years jewellers have delighted in the fabrication of bouquets in precious stones,—the leaves in emeralds, the fruit in rubies, and the flowers in brilliants, with sapphire centres. Some of them have even endeavoured to imitate birds' feathers. They succeeded in moulding sheets of metal, that is, in rendering them convex and concave, working them until they had something of a feather's



flexibility; with fine strokes of a saw, they detail the down and the quills, and then studding them with diamonds and other precious stones, they form brooches, ornaments for the hair, or aigrettes. But these efforts of skill are contrary to good taste and sentiment. He who attempts to imitate in hard brilliant substances, the soft down and airy lightness of a marabout feather, resembles the virtuoso who tries to play flute-like music upon a serpent. We should not try to do badly in one art anything that can be perfectly well done in another. How

many resources are employed by French jewellers, who are acknowledged to be the most skilful in the world ! With what dexterity they fasten the gems in the mounting called illusion, on almost invisible pins, gems which appear suspended without support, like drops of rain traversing the air ! How gracefully they redeem the too great freedom of a curve, by some angular lines, tying a ribbon, weaving a wreath, twisting a cable bracelet, shaping it ironically like a fetter, or giving it the form of an enve-



DRAGON-FLY IN DIAMONDS.

nomed asp ! How successfully they enamel formidable looking chains, load with gems or pearls a slave's collar, and attach miniature oats to a pair of earrings, which shine with every movement ! With what precision they reproduce in the pierced or open parts of their work, the caprices of the locksmith's work, the foliage of Moorish art, the tracings of Persian enamels ! And what fertility of imagination in renovating old models, or inventing new ones ! A pair of ear-rings is made of enamelled violets, and enhance wonderfully the beauty of golden hair ;

another pair will represent cherries, looking as though they had fallen from the tree from which the naïve Rousseau had thrown them. Here, a peacock in a niche spreads his



emerald tail ; there a pearl occupies the shell of Venus ; or brilliants and sapphires unite in the wings of a dragonfly about to settle on a lovely head ; or sometimes the artist is inspired by a piece of lace. The tenuity of the

wires and the clearness of the edges obtained by means of carefully burnishing the sides of the open spaces, enable a jeweller to arrange necklaces in brilliants imitating Venetian guipure and point d'Alençon, so that a woman can wear a lace necklace, with its *réseau*, its *brides*, its *jours*, its footing and its pearl edge sparkling in diamonds.

Occasionally, French jewellers allow themselves to be misled by the fever of emulation, or the desire of exciting astonishment. In our exhibitions electric jewels of startling novelty have been displayed. A Voltaic battery, small enough to be carried in the pocket, gave movement to a number of miniature objects arranged for the hair, as brooches or pins : a rabbit played a drum ; a silver head, with ruby eyes and enamelled lips, made horrible grimaces ; a convulsed butterfly and a bird flapping its wings were also represented, with numerous other fanciful toys, no doubt manufactured for exportation, and well calculated to delight savages.

But, with the exception of these whimsicalities, which are better forgotten, French jewellers excel in execution : they can modify the character of their work and vary its style with marvellous skill, either by contrasting burnished surfaces with dull ones, close with open work, plain with chased or granulated surfaces—like jewels in filigree work,—or by the mixture of red gold with silver or platina, or by the pleasing contrast of green gold with rubies or of gold in natural colour with sapphires. What a charming invention is this restoration to natural colour ! By plunging an article made of gold into a solution of certain acids, all the alloy on the surface disappears, and the pure gold colour is thus restored.

Thus changed by a corrosive process which can only be detected by the use of a magnifying-glass, gold takes a dullish appearance, which can be removed by a brass wire brush, or left to serve as a background for brilliant substances. Gold in colour should not be confused with coloured gold: the former is simply gold purified on its surface from all alloy.

We now reach enamelling, which is sometimes of great importance in jewellery.

Enamel is a crystal (a vitreous paste). When used in art or industrial work, it is coloured by being combined with metallic oxides. It is thus composed of two substances: a vitreous, colourless and fusible substance, called flux, and the metallic oxide with which the flux is mixed in the fire, and which gives it a brilliant colour; generally the oxides leave the crystal its transparency, but oxide of tin has the property of making the enamel opaque and white. The word enamel presupposes the action of fire. M. Jules Labarte* says that "a jewel is not said to be enamelled because it is ornamented with pieces of coloured glass set in a bezel without the aid of heat or cemented to the jewel; but it is the fusion of enamel in interstices previously prepared on a piece of metal that constitutes enamelling." The colours produced by the oxides upon enamel, form the richest palette imaginable. "Where else can we find so rich a harvest of colour?" says an enamel painter, M. Claudius Popelin—"white as snow, or softly dull like ivory, the lustrous mourning of the raven's wing, or the fuliginous black of ebony, pearl greys, slate-coloured ashy tints, fresh lilac

* *Histoire des Arts Industriels*, v. 1, p. 18. *Orfèvrerie*.

and flax, deep violets, brilliant ultra-marines, sombre indigo, azure, beryl, emerald and malachite, the warm olive of sun-lighted bronze, the chromatic scale of dead-leaf tints, amber and citron, the splendid golden hues, the burning flame of orange and the ruddy glow of copper, the vivid cochineal scarlets, the soft amaranth, lustrous orange reds, flashes of vivid carbuncle! What accumulated resources! What materials in the hands of a person eager to revive an art equally charming and powerful!"* Since so many works have been introduced to us from the far East, which are rendered marvellous by the various styles of enamel employed in them, French jewellery has been much influenced by these models, and has derived a series of ornaments from them which truly belong to art and are enhanced by painting.

The enamels used in jewellery are *cloisonné*, *champlevé*, translucent on chasing in relief, and painted. The words *cloisonné* and *champlevé*, explain themselves. *Cloisonner*, consists in putting different enamels which require careful separation into distinct divisions. The dividing bands resemble metal ribbons soldered perpendicularly on to a metal plate; following the tracings of the design, they become its outlines, so that the pencil lines drawn by the designer on paper are replaced on the enamelled plate by a copper thread.

Champlever, means to excavate the foundation. In *champlevé* enamel, instead of placing delicate metal bands on the plate to define the pattern, the workman hollows, with a flat graver, the places destined to receive the enamel, reserving (*épargnant*) in the plate itself the out-

* *L'Email des Peintres*, by Claudius Popelin. Paris, A. Lévy, 1866.

lines of the design. For this reason *champlevé* enamels are sometimes called *taille d'épargne* enamels.

These two methods only produce flat paintings, formerly known as paintings without modelling. If an artist wishes to paint on a metal plate in the same way as he would paint on any other substance, giving to each object its shadow, its half tints and its lights, a coating of opaque white enamel (dial-plate enamel) is first spread over the plate, and on this coating the coloured enamels used in the picture are laid with a hair brush in the same way as in painting on vellum or ivory, leaving the whites in the background. This style of enamel is usually called Geneva enamel, probably in order to distinguish it from Limoges enamel, which we will now describe.

If the surface of the painting is to be entirely covered with thick colour, a layer of deep violet, lapis blue or black, is spread over the surface of the metal. The design is carefully traced upon it, and the figures are painted in *grisaille* with white enamel. This white laid on thickly forms the prominent lights, thinner it forms the half lights, and still more lightly laid on the shadows are formed by a gradual merging into the darkness of the background. When the figures are successfully traced in *grisaille* the most difficult and essential part of the work is done, for if a painting of this kind is well executed, the striking effects obtained by Polidoro and Andrea del Sarto on a large scale in their *camaïeu* wall decorations can be reproduced.

If the *grisaille* is to be coloured, transparent enamels are laid on through which are seen the details of the design, while they cover it with rich tints. Finally, to enhance the effect of particular ornaments, to imitate gold or silver dra-

peries, damascened arms, precious stones, the jewels worn by the persons represented, fanciful foliage, flames and other brilliant objects, spangles or *paillons* are used, that is, light leaves of metal are placed under the coloured enamels, giving them an incomparable richness. This style of painting, in which the metal is entirely concealed under the enamel, is called painter's enamel, or more generally Limoges enamel, for this town has given its name to painted enamel in the same way that Damascus did to the art of damascening.

Finally there is a kind of enamel which unites painting and sculpture, *pittura mescolata con la scultura*, Vasari calls it. A low relief is carved on a metal plate and a transparent enamel is poured upon it, the shades being darker or paler according to the depth of the hollows—just as water always looks darker where the bed is deep—and thus there are differences of tone in the same shade of enamel. The miniature is thus rendered more delicate, and more nicely modelled, than when it is painted on a flat surface, because the lights and shades instead of being picked out with the brush are formed by the bas-relief, distinctly visible through the transparent enamel.

Such are the ingenious and delicate processes invented by the refinements of taste, and used in jewellery to embellish woman's charms. Cloisonné enamel unites richness of ornament with sharpness of outline. The gold twists in tortuous windings to encircle fanciful pictures, flowers that bloom only in the garden of the imagination, chimeras, dragons, monstrous reptiles, stags covered with scales, and other fabulous animals, which are so often employed to decorate ceramic art in the East, as though Persia, China, and Japan had also their Apocalypse.

With painted enamels, jewels regain a portion of the charms which they had lost, because in this style of painting the artist escapes from the servile imitation of natural objects—an imitation far removed from poetic art. In painting on enamel, the artist is freer from prose and realism than in any other branch of his profession. The vitrified colours are sufficiently vivid to enable him to depict imaginary subjects, romantic adventures; to return to the barbarous ages and draw from their mysterious histories, scenes, which produce a piquant effect on an enamelled medallion, or a watch-case transformed into a jewel. I remember seeing a medallion with a picture of the “Knight of Death” painted upon it. He was represented armed cap-à-pie, lance in hand, precipitating himself into a deep blue abyss, decorated with golden stars. It was a grand subject in miniature, and the style was far preferable, even for a woman’s adornment, to the insipid pastorals so often represented upon jewellers’ enamels. Amongst those of the Renaissance preserved in the Louvre there are some with representations of wrecks, tossed on the white waves of a sombre sea, or tiny combats, where the conflict is at once brilliant and obscure.

With regard to the enamels called translucid on relief, they show us fine chasing through a glazing of coloured crystal; the miniature details of cold sculpture are thus enhanced by the brilliancy of prismatic colours.*

* In writing these chapters upon jewellery, we have consulted, as we always do, men in the profession. We take this opportunity of acknowledging our obligations to M. Meyerheine, jun., jeweller, M. Meyerheine, sen., formerly head of the enamel department at Sèvres, M. Falize, M. Leblanc-Granger (for the imitation of gems), and to MM. Rouvenat and Lourdel, to whom some of the designs reproduced in this chapter belong.

THE THEORY OF COLOURS IS A GREAT ASSISTANCE TO JEWELLERS IN ALL THAT CONCERNS TRANSPARENT ENAMELS—IN THEIR APPLICATION ON GOLD, SILVER, OR PLATINA—AND IN MOUNTING PRECIOUS STONES WITH ENAMELS.

The law of complementary colours, which does so much credit to modern science, is known to all jewellers either by tradition or intuition. But this law cannot be applied to jewellery (properly so called), that is to the reciprocal action of the colours of precious stones. It is only observed in the union of transparent enamels with metals or in that of precious stones with gold and enamel.

A ruby, for instance, is already sufficiently brilliant; it would be useless to enhance its colour by the juxtaposition of an emerald. The union would produce a hard contrast painful to the eye, spoiling instead of improving the harmony. Colours that are striking, without being complementary, such as turquoise and ruby, turquoise and garnet, turquoise and coral, fatally impair each other's beauty. So placed, the turquoise becomes green, the ruby scarlet, the garnet black, and the coral yellowish. Precious stones always look well arranged with diamonds, and nearly always with pearls, because the diamond, with a few exceptions, is only used in jewellery when it is colourless, and the pearl, from its silver shade, and in spite of its opaline reflections, may be considered as almost void of colour. However well all gems and precious stones sort with diamonds, their mixture with pearls is not always so successful; sapphires, emeralds, amethysts, and topaz look well with them, but the ruby, by its

brilliant red, is too decided in tint to be placed by the side of pearls. But rubies are charming when mingled with opals, because the one's vivid crimson finds an echo in the rosy flame of the other. But even in this case the transition should be softened by alternate diamonds.

Now let us speak of the effect of colour in enamels. Applied on gold, platina, or pure silver, the transparent enamel is optically influenced by its foundation, and the colour is considerably modified. If the enamel is green, it is only successful on fine gold; it would be crude on silver, and cold or impaired on the other shades of gold or on platina. If it is red, fine gold renders it warmer and more pleasing. On silver it would be harsh, and on platina it would acquire a brownish tinge. The red gold, which contains more copper alloy than any other gold, and which therefore is capable of oxidation, might tarnish red enamel. Silver and platina are the best metals for preserving the purity of blue and violet enamels, and white gold, that is gold of legal weight, gives to violet enamel the velvety effect of the pansy. Yellow enamel approaches orange on fine gold, and still more on red gold. Pink enamel retains its purity on silver, but becomes flesh colour on sterling gold. Finally, red gold gives to brown enamel the tone of Florentine bronze.

These variations result from the contrast or the analogy of colours. Science foretold them, experience confirms her prediction. But the theory is equally applicable in the harmonies of colour, intensified or softened, which are produced by the use of precious stones with enamel and with gold.

A clever jeweller has taken the trouble to examine these harmonies and has published a treatise on the subject,* in which he indicates the different effects produced by the juxtaposition of gems, enamel, and gold. Gold in colour lends a greenish hue to the topaz, but it deepens the shade of the emerald and the blue of the sapphire, and gives a clearer azure tinge to the Eastern pearl. In pursuance of the infallible laws of complementary colours, red enamel enhances the beauty of the emerald, and by the side of green enamel the ruby appears of a richer crimson and the garnet a more vivid red. Violet enamel heightens the tone of the topaz, which by the side of blue enamel takes a pretty orange tint. Green enamel increases the red lights which constitute the beauty of the opal. A setting of green gold reflects a charming rosy shade over pearls.

It is scarcely necessary to add that black and white acting as oppositions or as achromatics, can be introduced when necessary, but always in fine lines, either to refresh the eye and soften the violence of contrasts, or to give the work the piquant relief that a grain of pepper adds to food.

IN THEIR RELATIONS TO SENTIMENT AND BEAUTY, JEWELS ARE SUBJECT
TO ÆSTHETIC AND MORAL PROPRIETIES.

The races matured by civilization, whose tastes are raised and purified, limit more and more the use of jewels on the person, at least for men. The sex who wore them formerly, have now given them up. Our ancestors,

* *Traité spécial à la Bijouterie*, by L. Moreau, designer of jewellery. Paris, 1863.

the Celts, coming from the heart of Asia, brought with them several customs, which by their effeminacy jarred with the hardiness of the race, which had continued or become barbarous. Their chiefs still wore, like the Median and Persian generals, golden collars formed of spirally twisted threads, and called torques. They had also bracelets of distinctly Asiatic origin, and it was, perhaps, the Gauls of Brennus who imported into Etruria the use of these jewels, which in ancient Greece were reserved for women.

In Egypt, in the time of the Pharaohs, men's necklets were rewards given for brilliant actions, distinctions answering to the modern orders of knighthood; later, amongst the Romans, heads of Medusa, called *phaleræ*, were worn on the breast as honourable ornaments, of which the nature and significance have been clearly defined by M. de Longpérier, one of the ablest French antiquaries. When the Grecian cities awarded to their greatest citizens golden crowns imitating laurel or oak leaves, they seemed to indicate that in man only the head, the throne of intelligence, should be decorated.

In proportion to their elevation above savages men disdain jewels, leaving them for women. They only retain those worn as remembrances, emblems of attachment and fidelity, jewelled and wedding rings, lockets, trinkets, or rich scarf pins, which excuse their beauty by their utility. In Brazil medical students, from the time they become doctors, wear an emerald on the finger as a sign of their diploma, and in the same way the French bishops wear an amethyst as a symbol of their dignity.

In some parts of America infants are decorated with

diamonds, suspended round their throats, like the golden or copper balls worn by the Roman children. In Europe, in France at least, brilliants are not allowed to be worn by young girls, whose youth is considered a sufficient ornament. They are scarcely permitted to wear pearls and turquoises, the emblems of poetry and purity. Diamonds are not worn until after marriage. A bride should never remove her wedding-ring, nor lay aside even at night her ear-rings, called on that account *dormeuses*. A widow can only wear mourning jewels, in jet, black enamel, or black onyx; by the use of sad-coloured jewels, she certainly appears more disconsolate than she would by the absence of all ornaments:

Le deuil enfin sert de parure
En attendant d'autres atours.

LA FONTAINE.

The general opinion amongst women is that rubies and coral are equally becoming to brunettes; while sapphires and turquoises are more suitable to blondes. But I fancy that Rubens and Correggio, who robed their blondes in golden draperies, would willingly have added necklaces in topaz or yellow amber, remembering that beauty may be treated, like a sentimental malady, as well by similitude as by contrast. However, modern genius in its irresistible tendency towards equality, mocks at precious stones, by imitating them; it fabricates counterfeit emeralds, white and black pearls, so successfully, that only a jeweller can distinguish the deception. Aided by chemistry, which each day penetrates further into Nature's secrets, it imitates diamonds and, becoming more and

more skilful, it creates fictitious gems, which rival real ones. By means of thin leaves of beaten metal called tinsel, which are placed under coloured enamels to enhance their brilliancy, it heightens the colouring of false rubies and sapphires. By the aid of lining and gilding, ornaments are fabricated which display the gold, where it is necessary for it to be seen on the surface. In this way it supplies by a deception persons of moderate means with the luxuries of the rich. With or without jewels, charming women will never cease to charm ; but it would be ungrateful towards Nature, which has produced diamonds and precious stones, towards science, which teaches us to imitate them, and towards those who so skilfully cut, polish, set and mount them, to regard with philosophical disdain these treasures of concentrated light and colour with which human beauty can adorn itself.

XXI.

FAR FROM BEING A FRIVOLOUS SUBJECT, DRESS AND ORNAMENTS ARE FOR THE PHILOSOPHER AN INDICATION OF MORALS AND A SIGN OF THE REIGNING IDEAS OF THE PERIOD.

THE traveller who arrives in a country and who has not had time to learn the manners and ideas of the people whom he is visiting, may at once know or divine something of both from their architecture and from their costume. When, for instance, he sees, beneath the burning sun of Egypt, the Arab women carefully covering their faces, hiding their hair, and endeavouring to conceal their individuality, he at once comprehends that the preponderance of men and their suspicious dispositions have condemned women to an indoor life, and that the tyranny

which compels them to be always veiled, is the same that imprisons them in houses with no outside windows, and



FASHION DURING THE REVOLUTION.

where the rare apertures are obstructed by impenetrable lattices.

No doubt the climate, the soil, and the materials

furnished by Nature to the builder for his edifices and to industrial art for its textures are so many causes of variety which should be borne in mind by the traveller.



FASHION DURING THE FIRST EMPIRE AND THE RESTORATION.

It is none the less true that the current of ideas, the religious opinions, the domestic feelings, are revealed by the style of the apparel as clearly as by the character of the buildings. In Italian, *costuma* signifies customs or

manners, and in French even, the language of art, to observe costume is faithfully to recall the manners, customs, furniture and buildings as well as the dress of a nation.

In France, where fashion, which so many other nations follow, is originated, dress in its continual variations indicates less the general spirit of the French and their national character than the spirit of a certain epoch and even of a certain hour. During the Revolution, the fashions had an air of pride and agitation. The large handkerchiefs crossed on the chest were carelessly tied at the back. The bonnet had wide brims, bent by ribbons or confined by a kerchief, or ornamented with drooping feathers. The bodices were faced, like the waistcoats of the members of the Convention, like the boots worn by the men of fashion. Cloth, nankeen, silks, satins and muslins were varied with stripes or checks; the *balantines* clung about the knees of the women of fashion; dogs' ears flapped against the cheeks of the dandies, and the trinkets of their two watches jingled on their trousers. Later, during the First Empire, the costumes became inconvenient, cold and unpleasing; a false majesty was affected. The head-dress was an awkward copy of the antique; ruffs were re-erected; the short-waisted figures resembled a sheath. The starched figures, stiff lines, formal manners resulting from the shape of the clothes, were a faithful image of the moral stagnation engendered by despotism.

Then followed a reaction against the Voltairean philosophy and the French Revolution. Women's dress then indicated a return to chivalry and devotion, real or feigned. The bonnets were heart-shaped in front in remembrance of Mary Stuart, or rolled like a turban

they recalled the Crusades, or they were made in imitation of the head of an open carriage, hiding the charms of the face underneath from the eyes of the passers by.



HEAD-DRESSES DURING THE RESTORATION.

But soon the triumph of the middle-classes modified female costume. The dress and the head-dress increased in width. Waving bows or short curls were worn on the temples; the shoulders were enlarged

by leg-of-mutton sleeves, and since the scanty dress of the Restoration would have been ridiculous with so



FASHION DURING THE REIGN OF LOUIS-PHILIPPE.

great a development of the shoulders and head-dress, the hoops and puffed skirts were revived. Thus attired,

women seemed designed for a sedentary and domestic life, because nothing in their dress indicated movement, or appeared favourable to it.



All was reversed under the Second Empire: family ties were relaxed, and a growing luxury so corrupted manners that an honest woman could no longer be recognised by her style of dress. The female toilet was transformed

from head to foot, bows and ringlets disappeared, the chaste smooth braids, in which Raphael framed the foreheads of his Madonnas, began to wave and to be thrown back after the fashion of antique hair-dressing. At last the hair was worn quite upright, and the only ringlets and curls retained were worn on the forehead and the nape of the neck. The hoops were thrown backwards, and resulted in an exaggerated curve at the back. Everything that could prevent a woman remaining seated was developed, and everything that could impede her walk was discarded. They dressed their hair and themselves as though they were always to be seen in profile—now the profile is the outline of a person who is not looking at us, who passes and would avoid us. The toilet became an image of the rapid movement which bears the world onwards, and which threatens to carry away even the guardians of our homes. They are to be seen at this day sometimes clothed and closely-buttoned like boys, sometimes adorned with braid like soldiers, walking on high heels which throw them forwards, hastening their steps, cleaving the air, and hurrying their life as though to swallow up space, which in turn swallows up them.

THE END.





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